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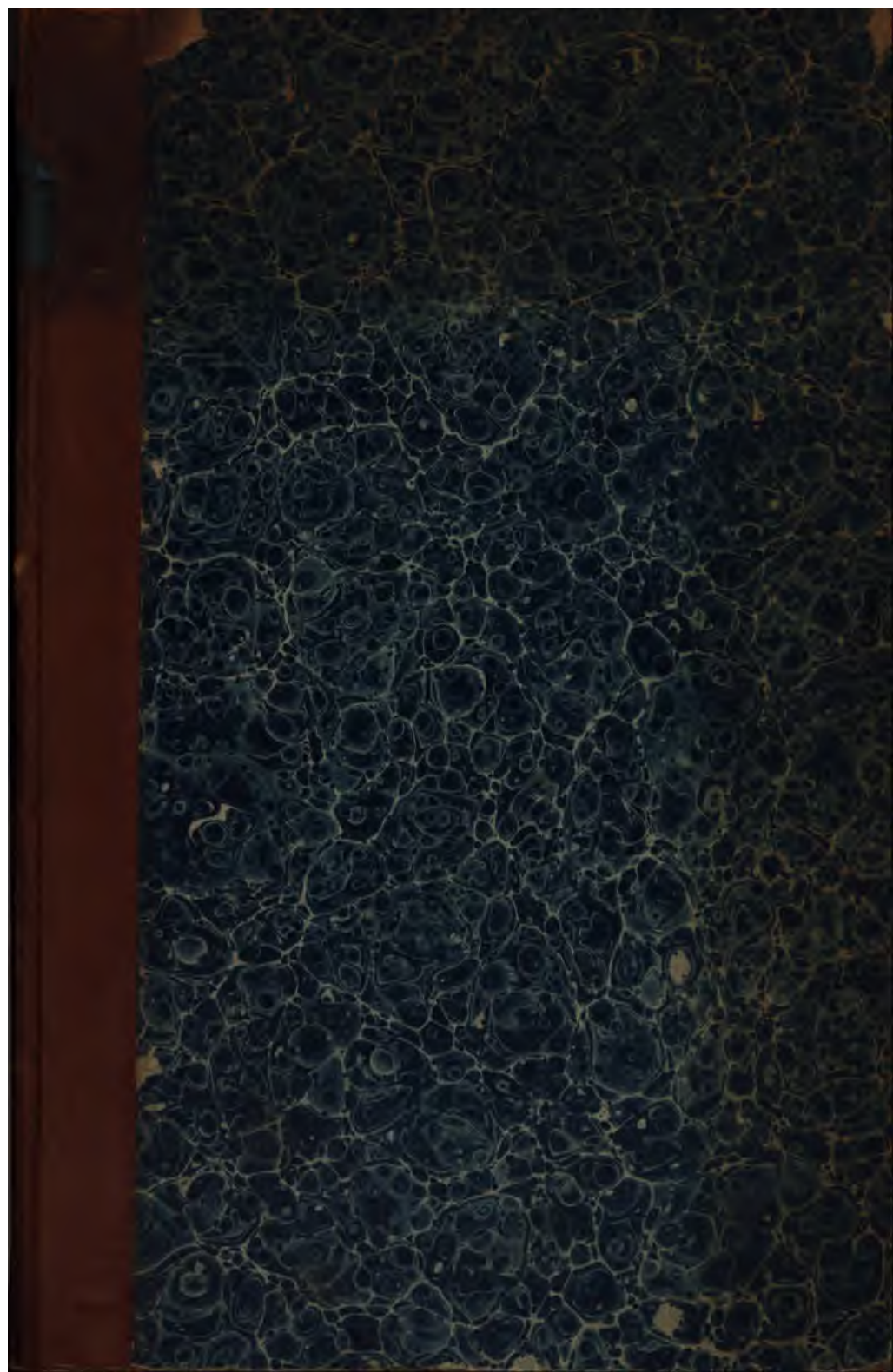
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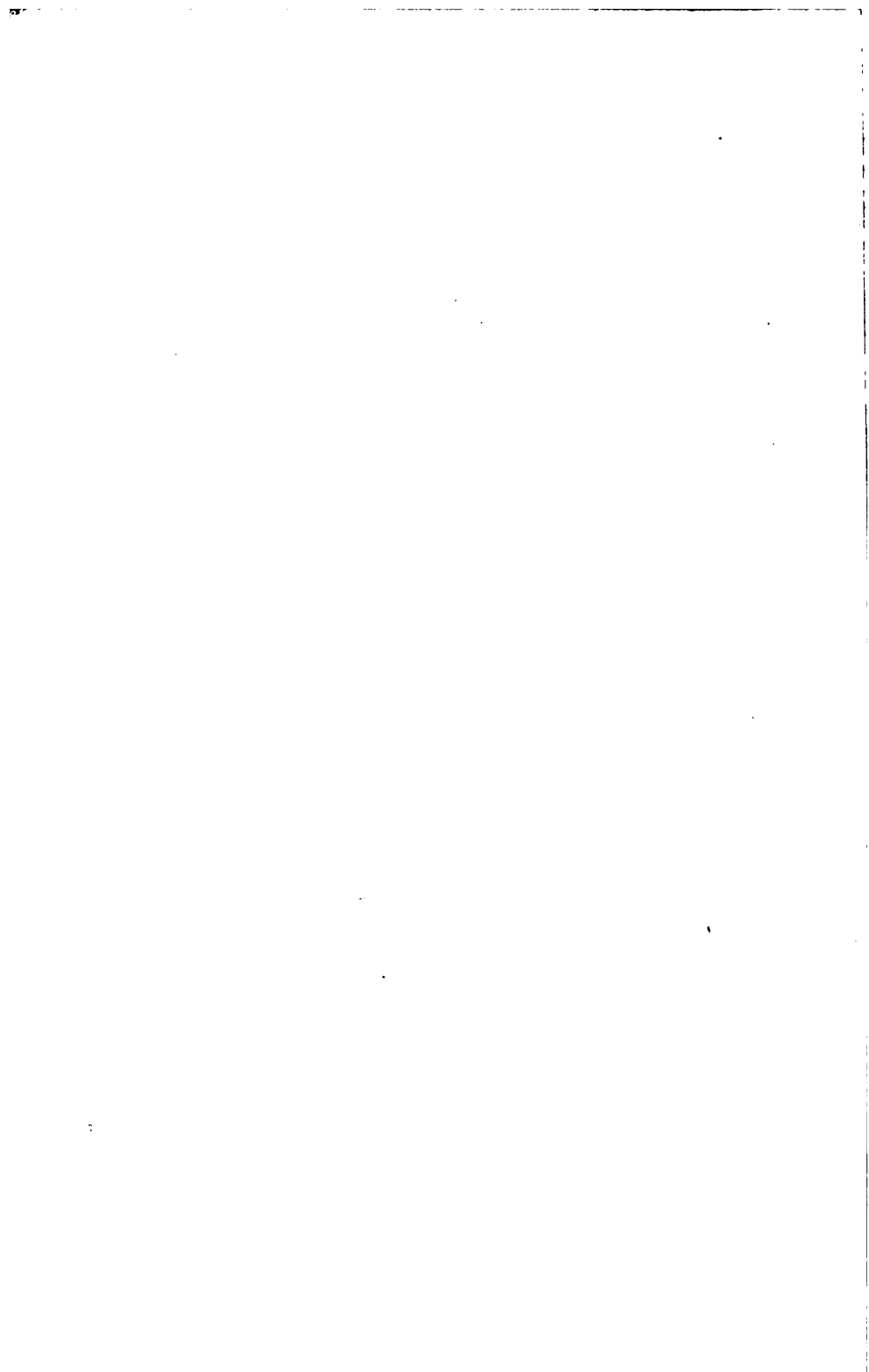
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GRAVE QUESTIONS
FOR
THE CONSIDERATION
OF
THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE,
OF
The Churchman and Dissenter,
OF
THE PROMOTERS OF STATE GRANTS &c.
AND THEIR OPPONENTS.
WITH
AN ATTEMPT TO ANSWER THEM,
CHIEFLY IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE.

LONDON:
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M DCCC XLVII.



P R E F A C E.

No one conversant with the religious public, and who, at the same time, feels interested in the cause of God and truth, can doubt the importance of the questions proposed in the title-page of this work ; nor can such a one deny that Dissenters are not in the way of having their voice heard either in or out of Parliament in the present day, there not being one of them in the Ministry, or in the House of Lords, and but very few in the House of Commons. Let it not excite surprise, then, that one of this unfavoured class should moot the questions above referred to, and should answer them on his own part, and according to his own conviction.

Nor can the Romanist, or the Anglican, object to the mode of putting the question ; for both the Churchman and the Dissenter consider Christ as the founder of our religion, and both consider it their duty to avoid a departure from "the faith once delivered to the saints." Thus at liberty, we proceed on the part of the Dissenters, first—to state the ORIGINATION of Dissent, in order that we might no longer

be charged with faction or schism in dissenting, seeing it was by a sort of moral compulsion that we thus dissented; and then, secondly—to state our MOTIVES for such conduct, which will be found—in fidelity to Christ, our “one Master and Lord”—in loyalty to God, as the “Great King,” and “The Most High over all the earth”—in adherence to primitive purity—and in a reference to the first and original import of the words used in the controversy, as well as to the primary state of things in “the Church of the Living God.” Can a fairer method of coming at the truth be devised? If so, let it be suggested. Upon this ground, then, we stand ready to maintain our footing, as the real friends of the cause of God and truth; and let the Great Head of the Church, who is Himself “the Truth,” and has “the Spirit of Truth” in his gift, decide the interesting questions! To these three questions we have appended another, as a leading one of the day, in reference to the connexion of the Church with the State, making our appeal to the Scripture, as the only “judge to end the strife.” May that earnest desire to make God’s “testimonies” his “counsellors” which possesses the breast of the writer, possess, also, the breast of the reader.

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PART I.

THE ORIGATION OF DISSENT:

BEING

AN EXPOSÉ

OF THE

“COARSE PULLEYS & DIRTY ROPES”*

AT WORK IN BRINGING FORTH

THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY,

COMPELLING TO A

Dissent from the Church of England,

AS DRAWN FROM

BISHOP BURNET’S “HISTORY OF HIS OWN TIME.”

* “I have been behind the scenes—I have seen all the coarse pulleys and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machine.”

LORD CHESTERFIELD—*though on another subject.*

QUESTION I.

WHENCE THE ORIGATION OF DISSENT?

WE cannot better plead our cause as Dissenters, perhaps, than by exposing to view the *agents*, *agencies*, and *animus*, at work in bringing about that "ACT OF UNIFORMITY," which compelled two thousand ministers of the Church of England to resign their livings; for, in doing this, we hope to prove that not *they* were guilty of schism, or "caused divisions and offences," but the *framers of the Act*. Then, perhaps, we shall see the injustice of proscribing Dissenters, and behaving towards them so exclusively and injuriously.

We think it right to remark, also, lest we should be considered as influenced by a spirit of resentment, that though we have used the phraseology of Lord Chesterfield, when speaking of another subject, in our title, applying them to those times, yet we would be far from applying such language to the persons, or the government *now* existing. No, we readily acknowledge, that they apply not to our gracious sovereign, to our ministers of state, to our parliament, or to our clergy, for we live, through Divine goodness, in better times; yet still, the writer would not have the reader understand, that even the present existing authorities have it in their commission from the great Head of the church, to *legislate*, and set forth any such "Acts of Uniformity," or to oblige a people to believe, and worship, and use discipline alike; nor that they should, whether of the civil or ecclesi-

astical order, assume "dominion over our faith." We think and say as Dr. Watts :—

"Let Cæsar's due be ever paid
To Cæsar and his throne ;
But consciences and souls were made
To be the Lord's alone."

It is a fact that has been clearly developed and fully established, that, in the reformation from popery in England, corruptions in the church, known to be such, and designed to be removed, were yet retained upon Elizabeth's coming to the throne. To remove these, or to have them removed, was the great desire of many pious and learned men of that and succeeding times, who, because they sought to purge them away, were called "PURITANS." Their endeavours, however, were in vain ; and at length, their principles, and their very name, became hateful to the opposing party which now held the reins of government. Great were the sufferings which these Puritans had to endure during the reigns of Elizabeth, of James the First, of Charles the First, and of Charles the Second, because of their adherence to primitive purity, and their conscientious non-compliance with the many attempts to induce them to concede to the demand for uniformity made by the government. For, much as these Puritans themselves wished for uniformity, yet could they not comply with things which appeared to them unscriptural, and contrary to the will of Christ ; for they judged that they must not "hearken to man rather than to God," and that they must "obey God rather than men." At length, however, in the reign of Charles the Second, in the year 1662, the "Act of Uniformity" passed, which required them, upon pain of exclusion from their livings, to declare their unfeigned assent and consent to everything in the Book of Common Prayer, &c. &c. ; but of this we shall see more hereafter. We mention it now, because it was that Act which occasioned those, to the number of two thousand, who before occupied situations in the church of England, and benefices or livings of greater or

less value, to resign them, and thus to become Dissenters. They could not keep them with a good conscience. Our business now, then, is to expose to view the "coarse pulleys and dirty ropes," to use the language of Lord Chesterfield on another occasion, which were in operation to bring forth this "Act," by which Dissent was thus occasioned—called, indeed, at that time, "Nonconformity," though, generally, after the "Act of Toleration," in the reign of William and Mary, "Dissent."

We collect our information, as proposed, from Dr. Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, a man justly celebrated for his writings, and for his character. At the close of his life he wrote a "HISTORY of his own Time," in two folio volumes, with a "CONCLUSION," to be read after his decease.* This history states the conduct, and delineates the character, of perhaps all the most eminent statesmen of his day, as well as of some of the rulers of the church, with many of whom he had formed a personal acquaintance. He unveils also the mysteries of State and Church policy; and, as Lord Chesterfield says of himself, "he had been behind the scenes," and "had seen all the coarse pulleys and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machine." It would be difficult to point out a single individual in those times whose position in society, and whose circumstances, would be so favourable for giving us a correct view of the state of things, both civil and ecclesiastical, as was that of Bishop Burnet; "For," says he, "I fell into great acquaintance and friendship with several persons who either were or had been ministers of state, from whom, when the secret of affairs was over, I studied to know as many particulars as I could draw from them. And now for above thirty years I have lived in such intimacy with all who have had the chief conduct of affairs, and have been so much trusted, and on so many important occasions employed by them, that I have been able to penetrate far into the true secrets of counsels and designs."† He

* Folio Edit. Ward: 1724.

† Vol. i. Preface, p. 2.

adds, "I write with a design to make both myself and my readers wiser and better, and to lay open the good and bad of all sides and parties, as clearly and impartially as I myself understood it, concealing nothing that I thought fit to be known, and representing things in their natural colours, without art or disguise, without any regard to kindred or friends, to parties or interests; for I do solemnly say this to the world, and make my humble appeal upon it to the great God of truth, that I tell the truth on all occasions, as fully and freely as, upon my best inquiry, I have been able to find it out. Where things appear doubtful, I deliver them with the same uncertainty to the world; some may perhaps think that, instead of favouring my own profession, I have been more severe upon them than was needful. But my zeal for the true interest of religion and of the clergy, made me more careful to undeceive good and well-meaning men of my own order and profession for the future, and to deliver them from common prejudices and mistaken notions, than to hide or excuse the faults of those who will, perhaps, be gone off the stage before this work appear on it. I have given the characters of men very impartially and copiously; for nothing guides one's judgment more truly in a relation of matters of fact, than the knowing the tempers and principles of the chief actors." And then he adds,—“I look on the perfecting of this work, and the carrying it on through the remaining part of my life, as the greatest service I can do to God and to the world; and, therefore, I set about it with great care and caution. For I reckon a lie in history to be as much a greater sin than a lie in common discourse, as the one is like to be more lasting and more generally known than the other.”* And he concludes his preface in this solemn manner,—“And now, O my God! the God of my life! I offer this work to thee, to whose honour it is chiefly intended, that thereby I may awake the world to just reflections on their

* Preface, pp. 2, 3.

own errors and follies, and call on them to acknowledge thy providence, to adore it, and ever to depend on it.”*

So much with regard to the “HISTORY;” now, with respect to the “CONCLUSION,” at the end of the “History.” Having observed, that he had “set out the state of affairs for above half a century with all the care and attention that he was capable of,” he says, with reference to this “Conclusion,” “This is a sort of testament, or dying speech, which I leave behind me, to be read and considered when I can speak no more: I do most earnestly beg of God to direct me in it, and to give it such an effect on the minds of those who read it, that I may do more good when dead, than I could ever hope to do while I was alive.”†

To prove still more fully that his position and circumstances were pre-eminently favourable for information and judgment, we may add, that he not only was much at court, but, as he says himself, he “had the honour to be admitted to much free conversation with five of our sovereigns—King Charles the Second, King James the Second, King William the Third, Queen Mary, and Queen Anne;‡ and, with reference to matters of religion, besides his acquaintance with the clergy, and the church, and dissenters at home, he had travelled abroad into Holland, where he “became acquainted,” as the history of his “Life” says, “with the leading men of the different persuasions tolerated in that country, as the Arminians, the Lutherans, the Unitarians, the Brownists, the Anabaptists, and the Papists; amongst each of whom he used frequently to declare, he had met with men of such real piety and virtue, that there he became fixed in that strong principle of universal charity, and of thinking well of those that differed from him, as likewise in an invincible abhorrence of all severities on account of religious dissensions, which hath often drawn upon

* Preface, p. 4.

† Vol. ii. p. 633.

‡ With respect to King William and Queen Mary, see vol. ii. p. 699.

him the bitterest censures of those who, perhaps by a narrower education, were led into a narrower way of thinking.”*

Enough this to vindicate the writer of this work in drawing his information from such a man as Bishop Burnet.

We proceed, then, to the object of it, which is, to expose to view the actors, the agencies, and the animus, which originated the Act of Uniformity; an Act which impelled two thousand ministers, then of the church of England, to quit their livings, and so to become Nonconformists, or, as they were afterwards called, “Dissenters:” by which, if we cannot be considered as rebutting the charge of schism, so as to make it fall back upon our accusers, we may, at least, soften their asperity, and cause them no longer to stigmatize our ministers as intruders, and our people as aliens.

And *when* was it that this measure took place? It was just after Episcopacy, or a government of the church by bishops, had been forced upon the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. And as an exhibition of this movement will, in no small degree, throw light upon the state and animus of the government here at that time, we will enter somewhat particularly into the consideration of the actors and actings by which that change also was brought about. And in what way was it done? We will get a little behind the scenes here too also, and look at the “coarse pulleys and dirty ropes” at work in this affair; and an episcopalian bishop of the church of England, himself a Scotchman, shall introduce us. Earl Midletoun and Archbishop Sharp were the leading men; the former was appointed, by King Charles the Second, Lord Commissioner for Scotland; the latter became Archbishop of St. Andrews.

At first the king, as well as Midletoun and Sharp, appeared to favour Presbyterianism; for, in 1660, Sharp “being pressed by those who employed him to procure somewhat from the king that would look like a confirmation of the

* Vol. ii., Life of Burnet, p. 677.

(presbyterian) government, and put to silence all discourses of an intended change, obtained, by the Earl of Lauderdale's means, that a letter should be written by the king to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, to be communicated by them to all the other Presbyterians in Scotland, in which he confirmed the General Assemblies that sate at St. Andrews and Dundee while he was in Scotland, and that had confirmed the public resolutions; in which he ordered them to proceed to censure all those who had protested against them, and would not now submit to them. The king did also confirm their presbyterian government, as it was by law established." The bishop afterwards adds, "The letter was received with transports of joy: the Presbyterians reckoned they were safe."*

But behold the change only in the next year! Episcopacy was to be restored—and was restored by the government; and by what agents and agencies? Speaking of the Earl of Midletoun, Burnet says, "His way of living was the most splendid the nation had ever seen; but it was likewise the most scandalous, for vices of all sorts were the open practices of those about him. Drinking was the most notorious of all, which was often continued through the whole night to the next morning: and many disorders happening after these irregularities, the people, who never before that time had seen anything like it, came to look with an evil eye on everything that was done by such a set of lewd and vicious men. This laid on all men's minds a new prejudice against Episcopacy; for they who could not examine into the nature of things were apt to take an ill opinion of every change of religion that was brought about by such bad instruments. There had been a face of gravity and piety in the former administration which made the libertinage of the present time more odious."† Bishop Burnet further says, speaking of the temper of the *people* after the act for establishing Episcopacy had passed, "In the northern parts very

* Life of Burnet, vol. i. p. 109.

† Ibid. pp. 113, 114.

few stood out, but in the western parts scarce any came into them. The Earl of Midletoun went to Glasgow before Michaelmas ; so when the time fixed by the Act was passed, and that scarce any one in all these counties had paid any regard to it, he called a meeting of the Privy Council, that they might consider what was to be done. Duke Hamilton told me they were all so drunk that day, that they were not capable of considering anything that was laid before them, and would hear of nothing but the executing the law without any relenting or delay. So a proclamation was issued out, requiring all who had their livings without presentations, and who had not obeyed the late Act, to give over all further preaching, or serving the cure, and to withdraw from their parishes immediately. And the military men that lay in the country were ordered to pull them out of their pulpits, if they should presume to go on in their functions. This was opposed only by Duke Hamilton, and Sir James Lockhart, father to Sir William Lockhart. They represented that the much greater part of the preachers in these counties had come into their churches since the year 1649—that they were very popular men, both esteemed and beloved of their people—it would be a great scandal if they should be turned out, and none be ready to be put in their places : and it would not be possible to find a competent number of well-qualified men to fill the many vacancies that this proclamation would make. The Earl of Midletoun would hear of nothing but the immediate execution of the law. So the proclamation was issued out; and upon it above 200 churches were shut up in one day ; and above 150 more were to be turned out for not obeying, and submitting to the bishop's summonses to their synod. All this was done without considering the consequences of it, or communicating it to the other bishops. Sharp said to myself, that he knew nothing of it ; nor did he imagine it that so rash a thing could have been done, till he saw it in print,* (so that even Sharp

* Life of Burnet, vol. i. p. 154.

must be exempt from this charge.) "The people were much troubled," says Burnet, "when so many of their ministers were turned out."* The people, seeing the Earl of Middleton and all the train that followed him through those counties running into excesses of all sorts, and railing at the very appearance of virtue and sobriety, were confirmed in the belief of all that their ministers had told them. What they had heard concerning Sharp betraying those that had employed him, and the other bishops who had taken the covenant and had forced it on others, and now preached against it, openly owning that they had, in so doing, gone against the express dictation of their consciences, did very much heighten all their prejudices, and fixed them so in them that it was scarce possible to conquer them afterwards. All this was out of measure increased by the new incumbents, who were put in the place of the ejected preachers, and were generally very mean and despicable in all respects; they were the worst preachers I ever heard. They were ignorant to reproach, and many of them were openly vicious. They were a disgrace to their orders, and the sacred functions; and indeed were the dreg and refuse of the northern parts. Those of them who arose above contempt or scandal were men of such violent tempers, that they were as much hated as the others were despised. This was the fatal beginning of restoring Episcopacy in Scotland, of which few of the bishops seem to have any sense.* As to the hand which Archbishop Sharp had in it, the following remarks of Burnet may show:—"All the bishops, except Sharp, disowned their having any share in the penning of this Act, which indeed was passed in haste, without due consideration. Nor did any of the bishops, no, not Sharp himself, ever carry their authority so high, as by the Act they were warranted to do." Here he has reference to the nature of the Act, as putting nearly all power into the hands of the bishop, and excluding the presbyters and clergy. And the account which Burnet

* Life of Burnet, vol. i. p. 158.

gives of his proclamation to hinder the meeting of presbyteries, his violence, his severity to prisoners, his subsequent disgrace, and his final assassination or murder, may be seen in the pages mentioned below.*

And what was the effect upon the people? In 1666, there was a rebellion in the west, in which, says Burnet, "they complained of the oppression under which they had groaned; they desired that Episcopacy might be put down, and that Presbytery and the Covenant might be set up, and their ministers restored again to them, and then they promised that they would be in all other things the king's most obedient subjects." The rebels were defeated, and many were taken prisoners; and, says our author, "The two archbishops (Sharp and Burnett†) were now delivered out of all their fears; and the common observation, that cruelty and cowardice go together, was too visibly verified on this occasion. Lord Rothes—now the lord commissioner, Midletoun having been disgraced—came down full of rage, and that being being inflamed by the two archbishops, he resolved to proceed with the utmost severity against the prisoners. Burnet advised the hanging of all those who would not renounce the covenant, and promise to conform to the laws for the future. But "the best of the episcopal clergy set upon the bishops to lay hold upon this opportunity for regaining the affections of the country, by becoming intercessors for the prisoners and for the country;" and many of the bishops went into this, and particularly Wishart of Edinburgh. The whole town also sympathized with them, and bountifully supplied their wants. "But Sharp could not be mollified. On the contrary, he encouraged the ministers in the disaffected counties to bring in all the informations they could gather, both against the prisoners and against all those who had been among them, that they might be sought for and proceeded against. Most of these got over to Ireland." And

* Life of Burnet, vol. i. pp. 141, 154, 206, 208, 210, 234, 236, 239, 470, 471.

† Not our Burnet.

afterwards the bishop proceeds to say, "It was a moving sight to see ten of the prisoners hanged upon one gibbet at Edinburgh; thirty-five more were sent to their countries and hanged up before their own doors; their ministers all the while using them hardly, and declaring them damned for their rebellion. They might all have saved their lives if they would have renounced the Covenant. So they were really a sort of martyrs for it. They did all, at their death, according to their phrase, give their testimony to the covenant, and to all that had been done pursuant to it. And they expressed great joy in their sufferings. Most of them were but mean and inconsiderable men in all respects; yet even these were firm and inflexible in their persuasions. Many of them escaped, notwithstanding the great search that was made for them. Guthrey, the chief of their preachers, was hid in my mother's house, who was bred to her brother Wariston's principles, and could never be moved from them. He died next spring. One Maccoil, that was only a probationer preacher, and who had been chaplain in Sir James Steward's house, had gone from Edinburgh to them. It was believed he was sent by the party in town, and that he knew their correspondents. So he was put to the torture, which in Scotland they call the boots; for they put a pair of iron boots close on the leg, and drive wedges between these and the leg. The common torture was only to drive these in the calf of the leg; but I have been told they were sometimes driven upon the shin-bone. He bore the torture with great constancy: and either he could say nothing, or he had the firmness not to discover those who had trusted him. Every man of them could have saved his own life, if he would accuse any other; but they were all true to their friends. Maccoil, for all the pains of the torture, died in a rapture of joy. His last words were—'Farewell sun, moon, and stars; farewell kindred and friends; farewell world and time; farewell weak and frail body: welcome eternity, welcome angels and saints, welcome Saviour of the world, and welcome God,

the judge of all !' Which he spoke with a voice and manner that struck all that heard it."*

Such, then, were the "*agents and agencies, and such the animus*" at work in the restoration of the Episcopacy in Scotland, under the reign of Charles the Second, and just before the enactment of the "Act of Uniformity" in England; and who that knows "the things of the Spirit of God"—anything of that Gospel Kingdom which is "*not of this world,*" but, indeed, opposed to its spirit and principles—but must be aware that the "lust of this world," and "the spirit of this world," must have been the animus which inspired such proceedings? And can such fail to deplore that a kingdom so, spiritual, so opposed to the "lust" and "spirit of the world," should be so subject to the rule of this world; and not only so, but disposed of according to its policy and its pleasure? We say "disposed of according to its *policy* and its *pleasure*;" for though the government of the church of Scotland had been presbyterian from the Reformation, when James the First became King of England, he made it episcopalian, then, afterwards, it became presbyterian—now, in Charles the Second's time, it was to be made episcopal again, and afterwards, by the permission of the government, it re-assumed its presbyterian form. Assuredly, when we see, in England also, the changes from popery or catholicism to protestantism, from protestantism to popery, and from popery or catholicism to protestantism again, as at the will of the civil government—also, how changes from one form of church government to another have taken place by the same worldly power, we sicken at the sight, and exclaim—When will the powers of *this world* cease to rule a community that is "not of this world!"

The "Act of Uniformity" having taken place just after the change in Scotland above insisted on, and by the same government, we not only see the bearing of that subject upon this, but also the agencies and animus that brought about the measure of which we are now to treat; and if we have

* Life of Burnet, vol. i. p. 237.

been behind the scenes to look at the "coarse pulleys and dirty ropes" which were at work in bringing about the change in Scotland, we cannot fail to conclude, that no other could be in operation to bring about the change in England. We will, however, go "behind the scenes" and see.

The "ACT OF UNIFORMITY," which morally compelled us to become Nonconformists, or Dissenters, was passed at a time when the nation had become extremely dissolute—when the church was in no small degree corrupt—when the bishops were worldly and arbitrary—when the court was licentious and profligate, and when the king himself, the "supreme governor of the church," was lamentably given to sensuality!

Such, then, was the state of things, as we shall now make appear from one of the heads of, and perhaps, as has been before declared, the most distinguished bishop in, the church of England,—Dr. Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury,—according to his own testimony, a decided episcopalian, and a warm friend to that church.

We begin with his testimony concerning

THE NATION.

"With the restoration of the king," says the bishop, about two years before the passing of the Act in question, "a spirit of extravagant joy spread over the nation, that brought on with it the throwing off the very profession of virtue and piety: all ended in entertainments and drunkenness, which overran the three kingdoms to such a degree, that it very much corrupted all their morals. Under the colour of drinking the king's health, there were great disorders and much riot everywhere; and the pretences of religion, both in those of the hypocritical sort, and of the more honest, but no less pernicious enthusiast, gave great advantages, as well as they furnished much matter, to the profane mockers of true piety. Those who had been concerned in the former transactions thought they could not redeem themselves from the

censures and jealousies that these brought on them by any method that was more sure and more easy, than by going into the stream, and laughing at all religion, tilting or making stories to expose both themselves and their party as impious and ridiculous.”*

And, speaking of the English gentry of his time, he says, “They are, for the most part, the worst instructed and the least knowing of their rank I ever went amongst. The gentry are not early acquainted with the principles of religion; so that, after they have forgotten their catechism, they acquire no more new knowledge, but what they learn in plays and romances; they grow soon to find it a modish thing, that looks like wit and spirit, to laugh at religion and virtue, and so become crude and unpolished infidels. If they have taken a wrong tincture at the university, that too often disposes them to hate and despise all those who separate from the church, though they can give no better reason than the papists have for hating heretics, because they forsake the church. In those seats of education, instead of being formed to love their country and constitution, the laws and liberties of it, they are rather disposed to love arbitrary government, and to become slaves to absolute monarchy. A change of interest, provocation, or some other consideration, may set them right again as to the public; but they have no inward principle of love to their country and of public liberty, so that they are easily brought to like slavery, if they may be the tools for managing it.”†

From such a state of the commonalty and gentry, we may easily conceive what would be

THE PARLIAMENT.

As to *arbitrary power*. Immediately following the last remarks, the bishop says, in his “Conclusion,” speaking of his “Times,”—“This is a dismal representation of things. I have

* Life of Burnet, vol. ii. p. 92.

† Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 648, 649.

seen the nation thrice on the brink of ruin, by men thus tainted. After the Restoration, all were running fast into slavery.”* Nor, although it belongs to years subsequent to the time of the Act of Uniformity, can we refrain from citing his remarks on this arbitrary power which in his days prevailed; says he—“Men who have no principles cannot be steady; now, the greater part of the capital gentry seem to return again to a love of tyranny, provided they may be undertyrants themselves; and they seem to be even uneasy with a court, when it will not be as much a court as they would have it. This is a folly of so particular nature, that it really wants a name; it is natural for poor men who have little to lose and much to hope for, to become the instruments of slavery, but it is an extravagance peculiar to our age to see rich men grow as it were in love with slavery and arbitrary power. The root of all this is, that our gentry are not betimes possessed with a true measure of solid knowledge and sound religion, with a love to their country, a hatred of tyranny, and a zeal for liberty.”†

As to their temper with regard to Dissenters, we have it, besides in some of the above remarks, in the following passage—“The House of Commons kept up the ill-humour they were in against the Nonconformists very high.”‡ This remark was made in treating of the year 1665, only three years after the Act in question; and, observe, it is said, they *kept* it up, which implies that they possessed the “ill-humour” before, even at the time of passing the Act.

THE COURT.

“I was in the Court,” says Bishop Burnet, “a great part of the years 1662, 1663, and 1664; and was inquisitive as I could possibly be, and had more than ordinary occasions to hear and see a great deal.”§ A pretty good judge, then, was

* Burnet, vol. ii., p. 649.

† Ibid. vol. ii., pp. 648, 649.

‡ Ibid. vol. i., p. 226.

§ Ibid. vol. i., p. 202.

the bishop of the state of the court then; and although the following quotation is extracted from the "History" in the year 1668, yet we may suppose that it will very well apply,—“At this time,” says he, “the queen fell into much extravagance in masquerading; both king and queen and all the court went about masked, and came into houses unknown, and danced there, with a great deal of wild frolick. In all this, people were so disguised that, without being in the secret, none could distinguish them. They were carried about in hackney chairs. Once the queen’s chairmen, not knowing who she was, went from her; so she was alone, and was much disturbed, and came to Whitehall in a hackney coach; some say it was a cart.”* And how could a court be otherwise than corrupt, when the king lived so licentiously?

THE KING.

In speaking of King Charles the Second, let not the reader suppose that the writer feels animosity towards him. No! Or disrespect to royalty. No! The position and circumstances of Charles in his early days, and the individuals by whom he was surrounded, forbid it. All that he wishes to do, is to state facts, that their bearings may be seen. Nor does he believe that Bishop Burnet, in the statement of these facts, felt otherwise. To these the author now proceeds,—“When he was about thirty years of age,” says the bishop of him, “he seemed to have no sense of religion; both in prayers and sacrament, he, as it were, took care to satisfy people that he was in no sort concerned in that about which he was employed.” And as to religious liberty, he adds, farther down,—“When he talked freely, he could not help letting himself out against the liberty that, under the Reformation, all men took of inquiring into matters of religion; for from their inquiring into matters of religion, they carried the humour farther to inquire into matters of state. He said often, he thought government

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 262.

was a much safer and easier thing where the authority was believed infallible, and the faith and submission of the people was implicit; about which I had once much discourse with him.”* With such sentiments as these, who can wonder at his desiring an “Act of Uniformity?”

Again, says the bishop, “In the disposal of offices and places, as it was not possible to gratify all, so there was little regard had to men’s merits or services. The king was determined to most of these by the Cabal that met at Mrs. Palmer’s lodgings. And though the Earl of Clarendon did often prevail with the king to alter the resolutions taken there, yet he was forced to let a great deal go that he did not like. He would never make applications to Mrs. Palmer, nor let anything pass the seal in which she was named, as the Earl of Southampton would never suffer her name to be in the Treasury books. Those virtuous ministers thought it became them to let the world see that they did not comply with the king in his vices.”†

“For some time,” says our author, “the king carried things decently,”—that is, with his new queen,—“and did not visit his mistress openly. But he grew weary of that restraint, and shook it off so entirely, that he had ever after that, mistresses to the end of his life, to the great scandal of the world, and to the particular reproach of all that served about him in the church. He usually came from his mistresses’ lodgings to church, even on sacrament days. He held, as it were, a court in them; and all his ministers made applications to them. Only the Earls of Clarendon and Southampton would never so much as make visit to any of them, which was maintaining the decencies of virtue in a very solemn manner.”‡—“The king had children by so many different creatures, &c.”§—“The mistress, created at that time Duchess of Cleveland, knew that she must be the first sacrifice to a beloved queen, and she reconciled herself upon this

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 93.

† Ibid. vol. i., pp. 164, 165.

‡ Ibid. vol. i., pp. 173, 175.

§ Ibid. vol. i., p. 261.

to the Duchess of York. The Duke of Buckingham upon that broke with her, and studied to take the king from her by new amours ; and because he thought a gaiety of humour would take much with the king, he engaged him to entertain two players, one after another, Davies and Guin. The first did not keep her hold long ; but Guin, the indiscreetest and wildest creature that ever was in a court, continued to the end of the king's life in great favour, and was maintained at a vast expense. The Duke of Buckingham told me, that when she was first brought to the king, she asked only five hundred pounds a year, and the king refused it. But when he told me this, about four years after, he said she had got of the king above sixty thousand pounds. She acted all persons in so lively a manner, and was such a constant diversion to the king, that even a new mistress could not drive her away. But, after all, he never treated her with the decencies of a mistress. The king had another mistress that was managed by Lord Shaftesbury, who was the daughter of a clergyman, Roberts, in whom her first education had so deep a root, that, though she fell into many scandalous disorders, with very dismal adventures in them, yet a principle of religion was so deep laid in her, that, though it did not restrain her, yet it kept alive in her such a constant horror of sin, that she was never easy in an ill course, and died with a great sense of her former ill life. I was often with her the last three months of her life. The Duchess of Cleveland, finding that she had lost the king, abandoned herself to great disorders ; one of which, by the artifice of the Duke of Buckingham, was discovered by the king in person, the party concerned leaping out of the window. She also spoke of the king to all people in such a manner as brought him under much contempt. But he seemed insensible ; and though libels of all sorts had then a very free course, yet he was never disturbed at it.*

Recording events in the year 1672,—“ This year,” says he,

* Burnet, vol. i., pp. 263, 264.

“ the king declared a new mistress, and made her Duchess of Portsmouth.” And in 1681, he makes mention of Mrs. Roberts, of whom we have spoken above, and the narrative concerning her is so interesting, that we cannot refrain from inserting it:—“ Mrs. Roberts,” says the bishop, “ whom he had kept for some time, sent for me when she was a-dying. I saw her often for some weeks, and, among other things, I desired her to write a letter to the king, expressing the sense she had of her past life ; and, at her desire, I drew such a letter as might be fit for her to write. But she never had strength enough to write it. So upon that I resolved to write a very plain letter to the king. I set before him his past life, and the effects it had on the nation, with the judgments of God that lay on him, which was but a small part of the punishment that he might look for. I pressed him upon that earnestly to change the whole course of his life. I carried this letter to Chiffinch’s on the twenty-ninth of January, and told the king in the letter that I hoped the reflections on what had befallen his father on the thirtieth of January, might move him to consider these things more carefully. Lord Arran happened to be then in waiting, and he came to me next day, and told me he was sure the king had a long letter from me, for he held the candle to him while he read it. He knew at all that distance that it was in my hand. The king read it twice over, and then threw it into the fire ; and not long after, Lord Arran took occasion to name me, and the king spoke of me with great sharpness. So he perceived that he was not pleased with my letter.”*

With a copy of this letter, inserted in another place by the bishop’s biographer, Dr. Burnet, we will close this account of the king ; and we will give it entire, as copied by the Doctor from the original then in his hands, with a memorandum how it was delivered, and when and how it was received.†

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 507.

† I give it entire, that the state of things, as well as the position and spirit of the bishop, may be better understood.

“ May it please your Majesty,

“ I have not presumed to trouble your Majesty for some months, not having anything worthy your time to offer ; and now I choose rather this way, since the infinite duty I owe you puts me under restraint in discourse, which I cannot so easily overcome. What I shall now suggest to your Majesty I do it as in the presence of Almighty God, to whom I know I must give an account of all my actions. I therefore beg you will be graciously pleased to accept this most faithful zeal of your poor subject, who has no other design in it than your good, and the discharge of his own conscience.

“ I must then first assure your Majesty, I never discovered anything like a design of raising rebellion among all those with whom I converse ; but I shall add, on the other hand, that most people grow sullen, and are highly dissatisfied with you, and distrustful of you. Formerly, your ministers, or his Royal Highness, bore the blame of things that were ungrateful, but now it falls upon yourself ; and time, which cures most other distempers, increases this. Your last speech makes many think it will be easy to fetch up petitions from all parts of England ; this is now under consultation, and is not yet determined ; but I find so many inclined to promote them, that as far as I can judge, it will go that way. If your Majesty calls a new parliament, it is believed that those who have promoted the petitions will be generally elected, for the inferior sort of people are much set upon them, and make their judgment of men from their behaviour in that matter. The soberer sort of those, who are ill-pleased at your conduct, reckon that either the state of your affairs beyond sea, or of your exchequer at home, will ere long necessitate your meeting your parliament, and that these things must be rectified ; and therefore they use their utmost endeavours to keep all quiet. If your Majesty has a session in April for supporting your allies, I find it is resolved by many that the money necessary to maintain your alliances shall be put into the hands of commissioners to issue it as they shall

answer to the two houses ; and these will be so chosen, that as it is likely that the persons will be very unacceptable to you, so they, being trusted with the money, will be as a council of state to control all your councils ;—and, as to your exchequer, I do not find any inclination to consider your necessity, unless many things be done to put them into another disposition than I can observe in them. The things that will be demanded will not be of so easy a digestion as that I can imagine you will ever be brought to them, or indeed that will be reasonable or honourable for you to grant them. So that, in this disorder of affairs, it is easy to propose difficulties, but not so easy to find out that which may remove them.

“ There is one thing, and indeed the only thing, in which all honest men agree, as that which can easily extricate you out of all your troubles ; it is not the change of a minister, or of a council, a new alliance, or a session of parliament ; but it is (and suffer me, sir, to speak it with a more than ordinary earnestness), a change in your own heart, and in your course of life. And now, sir, if you do not with indignation throw this paper from you, permit me (with all the humility of a subject prostrate at your feet) to tell you, that all the distrust your people have of you—all the necessities you now are under—all the indignation of heaven that is upon you, and appears in the defeating of all your counsels, flow from this, that you have not feared nor served God, but have given yourself up to so many sinful pleasures. Your Majesty may, perhaps justly, think, that many of those that oppose you have no regard for religion, but the body of your people consider it more than you can imagine. I do not desire your Majesty to put on a hypocritical show of religion, as Henry the Third of France did, hoping thereby to have weathered the storms of those times. No ! that would be soon seen through ; and as it would provoke God more, so it would increase jealousies. No, sir, it must be real, and the evidence of it signal : all those about you who are the

occasions of sin, chiefly the women, must be removed, and the court reformed. Sir, if you will turn you to religion sincerely and seriously, you shall quickly find a serene joy of another nature possess your mind than what arises from gross pleasures; God would be at peace with you, and direct and bless all your counsels; all good men would presently turn to you, and ill men would be ashamed, and have a thin party; for I speak it knowingly, there is nothing has so alienated the body of your people from you as what they have heard of your life, which disposes them to give an easy belief to all other scandalous reports.

“Sir, this counsel is almost as necessary for your affairs as it is for your soul; and though you have highly offended that God who has been infinitely merciful to you in preserving you at Worcester fight, and during your long exile, and who brought you back so miraculously, yet he is still good and gracious, and will, upon your sincere repentance and change of life, pardon all your sins, and receive you into his favour. Oh, sir, what if you should die in the midst of all your sins! At the great tribunal, where you must appear, there will be no regard to the crown you now wear, but it will aggravate your punishment, that, being in so eminent a station, you have so much dishonoured God. Sir, I hope you believe there is a God, and a life to come, and that sin shall not pass unpunished. If your Majesty will reflect upon your having been now twenty years upon the throne, and in all that time how little you have glorified God, how much you have provoked him, and that your ill example has drawn so many after you to sin, that men are not now ashamed of their vices, you cannot but think that God is offended with you. And if you consider how ill your counsels at home, and your wars abroad, have succeeded, and how much you have lost the hearts of your people, you may reasonably conclude this is of God, who will not turn away his anger from you, till you turn to him with your whole heart.

“ I am no enthusiast, either in opinion or temper, yet I acknowledge I have been so pressed in my mind to make this address to you, that I could have no ease till I did it. And since you were pleased to direct me to send you through Mr. Chiffinch’s hands, such informations as I thought fit to convey to you,* I hope your Majesty will not be offended if I have made use of that liberty. I am sure I can have no other design in it than your good, for I know very well this is not the method to serve any ends of my own. I therefore throw myself at your feet, and once more, in the name of God, whose servant I am, I do most humbly beseech your Majesty to consider of what I have written, and not to despise it for the meanness of the person who has sent it, but to apply yourself to religion in earnest ; and I dare assure you of many blessings, both temporal and spiritual in this life, and of eternal glory in the life to come. But if you will go on in your sins, the judgments of God will probably pursue you in this life, so that you may be a proverb to after ages ; and after this life you will be for ever miserable ; and I, your poor subject that now am, shall be a witness against you in the great day, that I gave you this free and faithful warning.

“ Sir, no person alive knows that I have written to you to this purpose, and I chose this evening, hoping that your exercise to-morrow may put you into a disposition to weigh it more carefully. I hope your Majesty will not be offended with this sincere expression of my duty to you, for I durst not have ventured on it if I had not thought myself bound to it both by the duty I owe to my God, and that which will ever oblige me to be,

“ May it please your Majesty,” &c. †

* This accounts for the political bearing of the letter at its commencement.

† Burnet, vol. ii., p. 686, &c. The author has extracted this letter just as it is.

Who can read this letter without feeling for the writer and the reader? and who that has felt the importance of the doctrine of the atonement, and that of the work of the Holy Spirit, in giving a "new heart and a new spirit, and in taking away the heart of stone and giving a heart of flesh," but must regret that so little of them appears for the encouragement of the royal delinquent? And why have we inserted this letter, and the other statement concerning King Charles's conduct? Is it from a spirit of censoriousness? Far from it. Ah! Charles, it is to be feared, never had exhibited to him religion in her divine beauty, and in her true Christian simplicity and power; nor, probably, had he around him faithful monitors. But we state these things with regard to him, as well as those before concerning the nation, and parliament, and court, to show how ill-qualified they were to pass the "Act of Uniformity"—an act which had so strong a bearing upon the interests of a church and a kingdom which is "not of this world," of which world they so manifestly were.

Nor will it avail to say that it was done according to the mind or under the arrangement of the church and its rulers; for it really appears, from Bishop Burnet, that they, too, were under the influence of the spirit of this world. However, let us hear his testimony of

THE COURT BISHOPS AND THE CHURCH.

Bishop Burnet, speaking of the sufferings endured by the Nonconformists resigning their livings on account of the Act of Uniformity, says, "The blame of all this fell heaviest on Sheldon,"* then Archbishop of Canterbury. And of him the bishop says: "Sheldon was esteemed a learned man before the wars, but he was now engaged so deep in politics, that scarce any prints of what he had been, remained. He was a very dexterous man in business, had a great quickness

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 185.

of apprehension, and a very true judgment. He was a generous and charitable man. He had great pleasantness of conversation, perhaps too great. He had an art that was peculiar to him of treating all that came to him in a most obliging manner; but few depended much on his professions of friendship. He seemed not to have a deep sense of religion, if any at all, and spoke of it most commonly as of an engine of government and a matter of policy. By this means the king came to look on him as a wise and honest clergyman.”* “And,” says Burnet, in another place, “Lord Tarbot told me that the king had expressed to himself the esteem he had for Sheldon, upon the account of the courage that he showed in the debate concerning the execution of the Act of Uniformity at the day prefixed, which was St. Bartholomew’s. A worthy day for a worthy deed, truly!”†

“Yet,” writes the bishop, “the king was much offended with the bishops (in 1667) at the behaviour of most of them, and he took occasion to vent it at the Council Board. Upon the complaints that were made of some disorders, and of some conventicles, he said, ‘the clergy were chiefly to blame for those disorders; for if they had lived well, and had gone about their parishes, and taken pains to convince the Nonconformists, the nation might have been by that time well settled. But they thought of nothing but to get good benefices, and to keep a good table.’ This I read in a letter that Sir Robert Murray writ down to Scotland, and it agrees with a conversation that the king was pleased to have with myself once when I was alone with him in his closet. While we were talking of the ill state the church was in, I was struck to hear a prince of his course of life so much disgusted at the ambition, covetousness, and scandal of the clergy. He said, if the clergy had done their part, it had been an easy thing to run down the Nonconformists; but, he added, they will do nothing, and have me do everything: and most of them do worse than if they did

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 177.

† Ibid. vol. i., p. 155.

nothing. He told me he had a chaplain that was a very honest man, but a very great blockhead, to whom he had given a living in Suffolk, that was full of that sort of people: he had gone about among them from house to house, though he could not imagine what he could say to them, for he said he was a very silly fellow; but that he believed his nonsense suited their nonsense, for he had brought them all to church: and in reward of his diligence, he had given him a bishoprick in Ireland.”* In another conversation which Bishop Burnet had with the king, “he complained heavily of the bishops for neglecting the true concerns of the church, and following courts so much, and being so engaged in parties.”† Thus far in the “History,” to which we may add his remark in his advice to the clergy in his “Conclusion,” “Indeed, I have lamented,” says he, “during my whole life, that I saw so little true zeal among our clergy;” and, again, “I must own that the main body of our clergy has always appeared dead and lifeless to me, and instead of animating one another, they seem rather to lay one another asleep.”‡ One more testimony of the bishop—“I say it with great regret, I have observed the clergy in all the places through which I have travelled, papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and dissenters; but of them all our clergy is much the most remiss in their labours in private, and the least severe in their lives. Do not think I say this to expose you, or to defame this church; those censures have passed on me for my freedom during my life, God knows how unjustly, my designs being all to awaken the clergy, and by that means to preserve the church, for which he who knows all things, knows how much, and how long I have been mourning in secret, and fasting and praying before the Lord.”§ And Archbishop Leighton judged the same; for, says Burnet, speaking of his death, “He looked on the state the church of England was

* Burnet, vol. i., pp. 258, 259.

† Ibid. vol. i., p. 356.

‡ Ibid. vol. ii., p. 638.

§ Ibid. vol. i., p. 641.

in with very melancholy reflections, and was very uneasy at an expression then much used, that it was the best constituted church in the world. He thought it was truly so with relation to the doctrine, the worship, and the main part of our government; but as to the administration, both with relation to ecclesiastical courts and the pastoral care, he looked on it as one of the most corrupt he had ever seen. He thought we looked like a fair carcass of a body without a spirit; without that zeal, that strictness of life, and that laboriousness in the clergy that become us.”*

It happened that a little before the obnoxious “Act” passed—in 1662—“almost all the leases of the church estates over England were fallen in, there having been no renewal for twenty years;” and “the fines raised by the renewing of the leases rose to about a million and a half. It was an unreasonable thing to let those who were now promoted, to carry off so great a treasure. If the half had been applied to the buying of tithes or glebes for small vicarages, here a foundation had been laid for a great and effectual reformation. In some sees, forty or fifty thousand pounds were raised, and applied to the enriching the bishops’ families. Something was done to churches and colleges, in particular to St. Paul’s, in London, and a noble collection was made for redeeming all the English slaves that were in any part of Barbary. But this fell far short of what might have been expected.” So far as to the facts, now for the consequences. Says the bishop—“With this great accession of wealth, there broke in upon the church a great deal of luxury and high living, on the pretence of hospitality, while others made purchases and left great estates, most of which we have seen melt away. And with this overset of wealth and pomp that came on men in the decline of their party and age, they who were now growing into old age became lazy and negligent in all true concerns of the church. They left preaching and writing to others, while they gave up them-

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 589.

selves to ease and sloth. In all which sad representation some few exceptions are to be made; but so few, that if a new set of men had not appeared of another stamp, the church had quite lost her esteem over the nation.”*

So far the bishop. But allow us to ask a question here. As long as there are such worldly emoluments, worldly preferments and “prizes,” as the Duke of Wellington called them, attached to the church, and these connected with *worldly patronage*, can we expect it much otherwise, especially as no evidence of spiritual regeneration is required before entering upon preparation for the Christian ministry? Worldly young men and worldly parents will, as long as human nature is as it is, be *allured by such baits*; for such is the obvious working of the whole machinery, and such has been its working, and more or less ever will be.

Such, then, was the state of things about the time of the passing of the Act of Uniformity, and such were the agents and agencies at work in bringing it about. And now to the Act itself. The *animus* of it may be seen in the declaration of Burnet, where he says, speaking of some proceedings in the year 1660:—“Instead of using methods to bring in the sectaries, they resolved rather to seek the most effectual ones for casting them out, and bringing a new set of men into the church. This took with the king; at least, it seemed to do so.”† And it may be seen also in the fact that things were added to the Liturgy that made it still more offensive. Thus, in a Collect drawn up for the parliament, the king, notoriously immoral as he was, was called “our most religious king;” and the story of Bel and the Dragon was introduced, and some new holy days.‡ And now let us hear

* Burnet, vol. i., p. 186.

† Ibid. vol. i., p. 179.

‡ When a certain gentleman showed some regret that the door was so strait, that he feared many sober ministers would not have admission, a certain Dean replied, “If we thought so many of them would have conformed, we would have made it straiter.” — *Burnet's Memorial of the Reformation*, pp. 318, 319.

Burnet:—"The Act passed by no great majority : and by it, all who did not conform to the Liturgy by the twenty-fourth of August, St. Bartholomew's day, in the year 1662, were deprived of all ecclesiastical benefices, without leaving any discretionary power with the king in the execution of it, and without making provision for the maintenance of those who should be so deprived ; a severity neither practised by Queen Elizabeth in the enacting her Liturgy, nor by Cromwell in ejecting Royalists, in both which a fifth part of the benefice was reserved for their subsistence. St. Bartholomew's day was pitched on, that, if they were then deprived, they should lose the profit of the whole year, since the tithes are commonly due at Michaelmas. The Presbyterians remembered when a St. Bartholomew's had been held at Paris ninety years before, which was the day of that massacre, and did not shrink to compare the one to the other. The Book of Common Prayer with the new corrections was that to which they were to subscribe. But the corrections were so long a preparing, and the vast number of copies, above two thousand, that were to be wrought off for all the parish churches of England, made the impression go off so slowly, that there were few books set out to sale when the day came. So, many that were well affected to the church, but that made conscience of subscribing to a book that they had not seen, left their benefices on that very account. Some made a journey to London on purpose to see it : with so much precipitation was the matter driven on, that it seemed expected that the clergy should subscribe implicitly to a book they had never seen. This was done by too many, as I was informed by some of the bishops. This raised a grievous outcry over the nation, though it was less considered at that time than it would have been at any other. Baxter told me that had the terms of the king's declaration been stood to, he did not believe that above three hundred of these ('the Presbyterians') would have been so deprived. Some few, and but few, of the episcopal party were troubled at this severity, or appre-

hensive of the ill effects it was like to have. Here were many men, much valued, some on better grounds, and others on worse, who were cast out ignominiously, reduced to great poverty, provoked by much spiteful usage, and cast upon those popular practices that both their principles and their circumstances seemed to justify, of forming separate congregations, and of diverting men from the public worship, and from considering their successors as the lawful pastors of those churches in which they had served. The blame of all this fell heaviest on Sheldon.* Such were the views of Burnet, the Bishop of Salisbury, concerning this affair.

Afterwards, it appears from the bishop, "there was a great debate in council, a little before St. Bartholomew's day, whether the Act of Uniformity should be punctually executed or not. Some moved to have the execution of it delayed to the next session of parliament. Others were for the execution of it in the main, but to connive at some eminent men, and to put curates into their churches to read and officiate according to the Common Prayer, but to leave them to preach until they should die out. The Earl of Manchester laid all these things before the king with much zeal, but with no great force. Sheldon, on the other hand, pressed the execution of the law."†

Such were the actors, and agencies, and *animus* that brought forth the Act of Uniformity. And now, let us see what were its provisions or its several enactments, and the reasons why the two thousand ministers, then of the church of England, would not conform to the Act.

By this Act, 1. "These Puritan ministers (called by Burnet, Presbyterians) were obliged to be re-ordained, if they had not been episcopally ordained before. 2. They were to declare their unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, and administration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies

* Burnet, vol. i., pp. 184, 185.

† Ibid. vol. i., pp. 191, 192.

of the Church of England, together with the Psalter : also, with the form and manner of making, ordaining, and consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons. 3. To take the oath of canonical obedience. 4. To abjure the Solemn League and Covenant. 5. To abjure the lawfulness of taking arms against the king, or any commanded by him, on any pretence whatsoever. And then, in case of nonconformity," as Bishop Burnet says, "they were to be deprived of all ecclesiastical benefices, without leaving any discretionary power with the king in the execution of it, and without provision for the maintenance of those who should be so deprived,"* &c., (see before.)

"In consequence of this act, at the lowest computation, two thousand ministers were thrown out of their livings, among whom were many eminently learned and pious, as Messrs. Gilpin, Bates, Manton, Jacomb, Owen, Goodwin, Baxter, Newcomen, Calamy, Jackson, Poole, Caryl, Charnock, Gouge, Jenkins, Gale, Mead, Howe, Greenhill, Clark, Flavel, Philip Henry, and other of like character. The Nonconformists were reviled in the pulpits, under the opprobrious names of schismatics and fanatics ; they were exposed in the play-house, and insulted by the mob ; insomuch, that they were obliged to lay aside their habits, and walk in disguise. Such magistrates were put into commission as executed the penal laws with severity. Informers were encouraged and rewarded. 'It is impossible,' says The Conforinist Plea for the Nonconformists, 'to relate the number of sufferings, both of ministers and people, the great trials with hardships upon their persons, estates, and families, by uncomfortable separations, dispersions, unsettlements, and removes ; disgraces, reproaches, imprisonments, chargeable journeys, expenses in law, tedious sickness, and innumerable diseases ending in death ; great disquietment and frights to their wives and families, and their doleful effects upon them. Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance to help them out of prison, and to maintain them there. Though

* Dissent, its Character, &c., p. 53.

they were as frugal as possible, they could hardly live: some lived on little more than brown bread and water; many had but eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family, so that a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in six weeks' time; their allowance would scarce afford them bread and cheese. One went to plough six days, and preached on the Lord's-day: another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood.* Such were the bitter consequences of this Act of Uniformity.

But why not conform, and avoid these calamities? We shall now answer this question. For this purpose we must revert to the requirements of the Act. 1. It required re-ordination. But what did this imply? That their previous ordination and ministrations were invalid—a thing not very satisfactory, either to themselves or their people. Besides, it invalidated the ordinations of the reformed churches, who had not been ordained by bishops so called, but by presbyteries. 2. They were to declare their unfeigned assent and consent, &c., (see before.) According to this, they were to declare their “assent,” which signified that the things were to be believed as *true*; but they could not so believe concerning many things. They were to declare their “consent.” This would mean, that they believed all the things required were *good*. But could they believe this, when they knew that some things tended to delude, and to destroy souls? They were to assent and consent to “*all*” things, as though true and good; and the assent and consent were to be “*unfeigned*.” But how could they declare this, viewing things, as they did, in the presence of Him who “desireth truth in the inward parts”? No men who have the spirit, of truth dwelling in them, and who have compassion for souls, could do so. And as to the rites and ceremonies, how could they declare their unfeigned assent and consent to things they had all along, upon principle, opposed? Then, 3rdly, comes the oath of canonical obedience. Now, what were the canons

* Neal in “Dissent,” p. 64.

which they were thus to swear to obey? They were in number, says Bennet, in his "Memorial of the Reformation," one hundred and forty-one, an abstract of thirty-six of which, concerning subscription, he gives, amongst which there is as follows:—"That the Book of Common Prayer, and of ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth in it *nothing contrary to the Word of God*, but may be lawfully used, and that he himself will use the same, and none other, in public prayer and administration of the sacraments; that he alloweth the Book of Articles agreed upon in the convocation holden at London in 1562, and set forth by her Majesty's authority; and he believeth all the Articles therein to be agreeable to the Word of God." And, to avoid all ambiguity, the canons require that the subscriber set down both his Christian and surname, and declare he subscribes to the articles, and to all things therein contained, *willingly and ex animo*. An effectual way this of keeping out men who had been contending against the imposition of rites and ceremonies, and many other things contained in the Book of Common Prayer! Moreover, according to these canons, "Whoever should affirm that the church of England, by law established, is not a true and apostolical church, or that the form of God's worship established by law, and contained in the Book of Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments, is corrupt and superstitious, or that the Thirty-nine Articles are *in any part* erroneous, he must be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and not restored but by the archbishop or bishop, after his repentance and public revocation of these his wicked errors. Whoever shall affirm that the rites and ceremonies of the church are superstitious, or such as men who are zealously and godly affected may not with a good conscience approve of them; or that the government of the Church of England by archbishops, bishops, &c., is repugnant to the Word of God; or that the form of consecrating and making bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth anything in it repugnant to the Word of God, is to be excommunicated.

Again, whoever shall affirm that such as refuse to subscribe to the form of God's worship in the Church of England may truly take unto them the name of another church not established by law, and dare complain of grievances; or that there are within the realm other meetings, assemblies, or congregations, than such as by law are allowed, which may challenge to themselves the name of true and lawful assemblies; or that shall affirm that any ministers or others may make rules or constitutions in causes ecclesiastical, without the king's authority, or shall submit themselves to be governed by them, let them be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and not restored till they publicly revoke the wicked and anabaptistical errors. According to these canons, too, the minister must admit none but such as kneel at the communion—none that refuse to be present at public prayers, upon pain of suspension. And as none must be baptized without the sign of the cross, with godfathers and godmothers, so no father shall be admitted to answer as godfather for his own child, nor be urged to be present; nor must the minister refuse to baptize any that bring godfathers, though Jews or Turks, unless the children of the excommunicated." Could the Puritans promise, "*ex animo*," and with a good conscience, obedience to these canons?

They were also to abjure the Solemn League and Covenant. But was it to be expected that those who had entered so solemnly into this League and Covenant could abjure it without conviction, merely at the bidding of men? Alas, that Christians, so calling themselves, should thus "exercise lordship," and should so assume "dominion over the faith" of their Christian brethren! Alas, that they should thus "lord it over God's heritage!" That a pope, who "sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God," or the disposer of things in the church or temple of God, should do so, may not now excite surprise; but that a church that calls itself a protestant church, because it protests against the errors of the pope, should do so, is inconsistent indeed—is lamentable indeed!

We will now close this subject with—

THREE QUESTIONS.

1. Who, after reading the above statement of the actors, the agencies, and the animus that originated the Act of Uniformity, will deny that there were “COARSE PULLEYS AND DIRTY ROPES” behind the scene in operation, to bring it about?

2. Who will deny that the Nonconformists, afterwards called Dissenters, did not become so by a sort of *moral compulsion*?

3. Who does not see that the rulers of the Church of England “caused the DIVISIONS AND OFFENCES,” and that therefore they were the SCHISMATICS?

So much, then, for the Origination of Dissent; and to disarm censure at least, we will affix the judgment of Bishop Burnet himself concerning our conduct, as in page 43:—
“Here were many men, much valued, some on better grounds and others on worse, who were cast out ignominiously, reduced to great poverty, provoked by much spiteful usage, and cast upon those popular practices that both their principles and their circumstances seemed to justify, of forming separate congregations, and of diverting men from the public worship, and from considering their successors as the lawful pastors of those churches in which they had served.”*

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 185.

FIDELIS:
OR,
WHO HAS THE BEST CLAIM
TO
FIDELITY TO CHRIST OUR "MASTER AND LORD,"
OR
LOYALTY TO GOD "THE GREAT KING,"
THE
Churchman or the Dissenter?

"One is your Master, even Christ."

"Ye call me Master and Lord."

"We ought to obey God rather than men."

SECTION I.

THE DISSENTER PLEADING FIDELITY TO CHRIST, HIS "MASTER AND LORD," AS A MOTIVE TO HIS DISSENT.

WHAT is fidelity in a servant? It is a strict adherence to his master's instructions and orders. And to this the Dissenters lay claim in their dissent from the Church of England, at least as to their purpose. They consider Christ as their "one" "Master and Lord," to whom they are to hearken, and whom they are to obey; to the exclusion of all other masters and lords. First, he is their teaching-master, for so the word διδάσκαλος imports; and then, he is their ruling Lord; and their language is, as to the former, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth;" and as to the latter, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" What does Jesus himself say? "Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ." And what is the import of the injunction? It is as if he had said, "Do not any of you presume to set forth as a 'doctrine' or 'commandment' anything to be believed or obeyed besides what I teach or command, for I am your 'one' Master and Lord, and I am competent to teach and to command whatever is requisite for you to learn and to do." Nor was this a new thing; for, in accordance with it, we find that God complains of the Jews, in Isaiah's time, that their "fear towards him was taught by the precepts of men,"—a passage which our Lord himself quotes, when he censures the Scribes and Pharisees of his day for "holding the tradi-

tion of the elders, and for "teaching" the people at that time, "for doctrines, the commandments of men." Nor were his servants, the apostles, otherwise minded; for Paul warns the Colossians, with reference to this subject, not only to "beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, *and not after Christ*," but also, not to be "subject to ordinances, after the commandments and doctrines of men." Nay, says he, "touch not, taste not, handle not," even though they had "a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body." In like manner does he warn Titus against "the commandments of men, that," adds he, "turn from the truth." Yes, Paul dreads, evidently dreads, lest the church of God should "turn from the truth," by these "commandments and doctrines of men." And well he might! for the very constitution and government of Christ's kingdom—a kingdom declared by the Lord himself to be "not of this world," was, in two or three hundred years after, by the doctrine and commandment of men, formed after the constitution and government of this world. Observe what follows, from Dr. Cave's "Ancient Church Government,"—"The whole Roman empire consisted of thirteen dioceses (for so they began to style those large divisions about the time of Constantine). In each of these dioceses were several provinces (one hundred and eighteen in all), the chief city whereof in every province was the *metropolis*, that had a kind of jurisdiction over the rest; both title and dignity being peculiarly settled by imperial constitutions. Now, the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions were concurrent after this manner:—In every city there was a civil judge, who presided over it and the towns about it; and to him answered the *bishop* of that city. In every province, a proconsul or president resided at the metropolis, governed that whole division, received appeals, and determined all important cases brought before him from the inferior cities. Correspondent to him was the metropolitan, or, as they often called him, the *archbishop*, whose see was in the same city, who superintended

the several churches and ordained the several bishops within his province. And then, in every diocese or large division of the empire, there was a vicarius, or lieutenant, who kept his residence in the principal city, thence despatched the imperial edicts, and there heard and decided those causes that were not finally determined by inferior courts; and concurrent with him in ecclesiastical matters was the *primate*, or, as some of them were more eminently styled, the patriarch, who presided over the several metropolitans within the diocese, appointed the conventions of his clergy, umpired the differences that arose between the several bishops, gave the determination to all appeals brought before him; and thus," adds the Doctor, "by an orderly subordination of deacons and presbyters to their bishops, of bishops to their immediate metropolitans (archbishops), of metropolitans to their respective primates or patriarchs; and by a mutual correspondence between the several primates of every diocese, the affairs of the Christian church were carried on with great decorum and regularity."* Ah! Doctor Cave, so say you, and so to *earthly* minds it might appear; but we know Him, who was predicted as "*ruling in the midst of his enemies*," who said his "*kingdom was not of this world*," and, of course, not its polity or government; who, speaking of the "*Gentiles*" as "*exercising lordship over them, and their great ones exercising authority upon them*," said, "*But so it shall not be among you*." And we know that in the Scriptures, our rule in this affair, there is neither precept nor precedent for any such thing; and we can judge from the thousands of congregational churches now existing in England and Wales, and in America, that there is no *occasion* for such a mode of polity or government, and that "*pure and undefiled religion*" prevails more without it. Besides, then, that fidelity to Christ, our Master and Lord, would require us to discard "*the doctrines and commandments of men*," we have facts before our eyes to convince us of the wisdom of the injunction.

* See in Dissent, p. 13.

And as the mischief of human additions has appeared in reference to the *polity* of the church, so has it as to *rites and ceremonies*. Who knows not that, on the principle, and in the spirit, of the polity above insisted on, the Bishop of Rome at length became to be POPE, and so assumed the dominion over all? And who knows not that in the end he was recognised as the infallible guide of the whole church? See, then, what this Vicar of Christ upon earth did and taught! It is the testimony of Bishop Jewel. And what does he say? That he taught men the use of private masses, which might be mumbled over in every corner—that he muttered the sacred mysteries in a low, soft voice, and in a strange language—that he hanged up the Eucharist, or consecrated bread, in every church, and enshrined it on every altar, and carried it before him whithersoever he went, on an ambling jennet with lights and bells—that he consecrated oil, wax, wool, bells, chalices, temples, and altars—and that he sold jubilee graces, immunities, expectancies, preventions, first-fruits, palls, the use of palls, bulls, indulgencies, and pardons.* And as the pope, so were the people. What rites and ceremonies was the church burdened with after these doctrines and commandments of men! But alas, “like priests, like people!” The people, too, “love to have it so;” and rather than live under the “*power* of godliness,” if they can be persuaded that they are safe for heaven in the use of the forms, they will, as in the apostles’ day, suffer a man to “bring them into bondage,”—“devour” them—“take of them”—“exalt himself”—smite them on the face, as the apostle expresses it. Just is the remark of Matthew Henry, the unparalleled commentator—“It is much easier to bring our minds to the external services of religion, and observe all the formalities of devotion, than to live a life of dependence upon and submission to the Divine Providence in the course of our conversation,” and we may say, to heartfelt religion. In fact, this excessive attention to rites and ceremonies eats out the vitals

* Jewel's Apology, p. 150, (Wertheim.)

of religion. No wonder that Christ should thus guard his followers against all who taught and commanded them. And we think that fidelity to him requires that we should reject them.

And *why append* other things to the doctrines and commandments of Christ? Is not the Church of Christ "complete in him as to instruction"? Are there not in him "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"? Is not the man of God *thoroughly* furnished unto all good works by the Scripture, and the "foundation of the apostles and prophets" sufficient? And what "need" is there that "any *man* teach" us otherwise than what our Master teaches us? Is not every mere man fallible; and have not many of the "leaders of the people" been exceedingly so? What dependence is there upon fathers, upon councils, upon popes, upon churches? Striking and true are the remarks of Chillingworth on this subject. After stating his opinion, that "the Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants," says he, "I, for my part, after a long, and, as I verily believe and hope, impartial search of the true way to moral happiness, do profess plainly, that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this rock only. I see plainly, and with my own eyes, that there are popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the church of one age against the church of another age, traditive interpretations of Scripture are pretended, but there are few or none to be found. No tradition but only of Scripture can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly proved to have been brought in such an age after Christ, or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty, but of Scripture only, for any considering man to build upon."*

And what of the Church of England herself? Following "the doctrines and commandments of men," she was once involved in the errors of popery—then, though she re-

* Dissent, pp. 68, 69; and Puseyism, pp. 50, 51.

nounced the greater part of these errors, yet, under Mary, she became involved in them again. She is now Protestant, but she still even retains her fondness for some of them, and maintains in one of her "Articles," that "the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies." True it is, that the Article adds, "And yet it is not lawful to ordain anything that is *contrary* to God's word written;" but, then, it claims to ordain things *besides* God's word, and also to be its interpreter as to its sense, and allow fathers and councils to be so. In another Article also, she says, "Every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the church ordained *only by man's* authority, so that all things be done to edifying." But what if others should think that the things thus "ordained" should "turn from the truth" instead of edifying! And where is the Scripture warrant for this ordaining, and whither does it tend? Has it not developed itself most injuriously in the church of Rome? Yea, has it not operated injuriously in the Church of England?

But, after all, rites and ceremonies form but an inferior part of the mischief that has accrued to the "Church of the living God," by admitting the doctrines and commandments of men: as shown before, it has changed the very constitution and government of the church: and thus it has induced corruption into its offices, its discipline, its service book, and its worship; and by its worldly patronage, emoluments, and preferments, poisoned the very springs of its instruction. On each of these subjects we might enlarge, but must refer the reader to a work on DISSENT, lately published, wherein is shown the "character" of Dissent, "its causes, its reasons, and the way to effect its extinction."

In conclusion, we will say, then, that it is fidelity to Christ as our one "Master and Lord" that causes us to discard and impugn this human interference, and thus to dissent from a church that so manifestly admits of and requires it. Oh! had the church of Christ implicitly and strictly adhered

to the word of Christ, without human arrangements, human appendages, and worldly influence, she might have been, ere now, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!"

SECTION II.

THE DISSENTER'S PLEA FOR DISSENT, ON THE GROUND OF LOYALTY TO GOD, "THE GREAT KING."

LOYALTY to a king is a cordial submission to his authority and will, as declared in the law, together with a jealous regard for his glory. To such loyalty the Dissenters lay their humble claim in reference to God, in their dissent from the Church of England. They consider God as the "only Potentate—the Original of all power—the King of kings," and as "the Most High over all the earth;" and that therefore his authority is paramount to all other authority; and hence that any command of an earthly sovereign which contravenes the will of God is not valid, but must be declined. With the Apostle Peter, when commanded by the highest Jewish authority "not to teach and preach in the name of Jesus Christ," they are ready to reply, "Whether it be right to hearken unto men rather than unto God, judge ye;" and again, "We ought to obey God rather than men." In everything that does *not* contravene the will of God, the Dissenters are as obedient to their sovereign as any class of the community, nor have any shown a greater or more sincere attachment to the reigning family than they—it is only when they are required to believe, to worship, to practise, contrary to what they find in the Word of God, that they withhold their "assent and consent;" and they judge that loyalty to God, "the Great King," demands it.

And Scripture examples bear them out in it. When Nebuchadnezzar, that absolute and powerful monarch, commanded Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, to fall down and worship the golden image which he had set up, upon pain of being cast into a burning fiery furnace, did they "hearken to the voice of man rather than God"? Did they obey man rather than God? No: they chose rather to suffer the penalty. When Daniel was forbidden, by another powerful and despotic government, to make any petition either to God or man for thirty days besides to the king Darius, did he "hearken"?—did he "obey"? No: not though he would assuredly be cast into a den of lions! When the Jewish rulers forbade Peter and the rest of the Apostles "to speak any more in the name of Jesus Christ," did they hearken or obey? No: they "ceased not" to do so, whatever might have been the consequences. So when the Roman authorities required the primitive Christians to sacrifice to the heathen gods upon pain of being thrown to the wild beasts, or suffering other cruel deaths, did they hearken or obey? No: they hearkened unto God, and obeyed God rather than men. There cannot, then, be a reasonable doubt that all inferior rule must be subordinate to the supreme rule—the rule of him who is the "Most High."

This granted, the question that remains is—Wherein does the voice of man contravene the voice of God in the affair of dissent? First—While all protestants, and the Church of England amongst them, profess to believe that the Scripture is the only rule of faith and manners, yet the Church of England requires that we do not *interpret* the Scripture according to our own mind, but according to the early fathers, the first four Councils, and many to the sense of the church: but the voice of God says, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" and, "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." The voice of God says also to every individual believer, "*Prove* all things: hold fast that which is good:" it commands us to "beware of false prophets;" to "believe not

every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they are of God," as, in fact, the church at Ephesus did, and were commended for. Must we, then, take things from fallible men, fallible councils, fallible popes, fallible churches, or fallible clergy, without proving the things, without trying the spirit, without searching into the grounds of the claims of the men who boast of their authority as "successors of the apostles"? If so, we are hearkening unto men rather than unto God! Nay, we had better at once go back to Rome, for it claims infallibility—if, at least, it can substantiate its claim.

Again, it is the voice of God, that we do "not add to his word." Hear him—"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you; neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Hear him again, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Again, "Add thou not unto his word, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Now, we Dissenters feel that passages like these, when connected with the warnings of Christ against "the doctrines and commandments of men," require us to disregard and oppose all things, whether relative to faith, to worship, to discipline, or to practice, that are imposed upon us by men, and that loyalty to God, or submission to his authority and will, demand of us such disregard and opposition. Hence, we cannot allow men to have "dominion over our faith"—to introduce into the church officer after officer, of which the word of God is entirely silent, rites and ceremonies never enjoined there, and canons to bind the conscience, which it is vain to seek after in the true canon law of Scripture. Nor, we conceive, would there have been any apparent *occasion* for them, if the kingdom of God had not been modelled after the form of the kingdoms of this world, or of the Roman empire.

And then, knowing, as we do, that the "kingdom of Christ and of God" is "NOT OF THIS WORLD," but, in its spirit

and principles, opposed to it, we think it but loyalty to our "Great King," to protest against the WORLDLINESS of the Church of England. Now, what do we learn from our Great Teacher?—Doubtless, that the world and the church are two *distinct* communities, and indeed *opposed* to each other. Hear what he says: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Again, in his prayer for his people, he says, "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." In accordance with these expressions, we find, that to be "of God," and "born of God," is distinguished from being "*of the world*:" and with good reason; "for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world." And such is the difference and opposition, that the apostle John says, "The world knoweth us not," and, like his divine Master, he exhorts those who were "of God," "born of God," and, of course, subjects of his kingdom, to "marvel not if the world hated them." And as to the false teachers that came amongst them, he says, "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Who can read these passages without perceiving that they indicate a marked contrariety between the church and the world? Hence we see the reason why our Lord said, that "the world" would not "receive the Spirit of truth," whom he would send; and also, why the apostle Paul makes such a distinction between "the spirit of the world," and "the spirit which is of God;" and also declares that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are *foolishness* unto him." Yet

the Anglican Church owns a worldly head and government, exercising worldly influence, direction, and control. The Church of England admits of worldly patronage, the Lord Chancellor, amongst the rest, having more than eight hundred livings at his disposal; and facts without number prove that worldly emoluments, worldly preferments, and, as the Duke of Wellington expressed it, worldly "prizes," form a considerable part of its exciting and motive power! And to concur in a system like this, can it be right in the sight of God—can it be loyalty to the Great King? We Dissenters think not. The spirit, the working, and the tendency of the system, appear to us to be at variance with the spirit, and working, and tendency of that system which is "of God," and "not of the world."

To this argument concerning the worldliness of the Anglican Church system, we add, that really our reason and common sense suggest to us, that however we may respect the civil government of this kingdom—and, as observed before, none of her Majesty's subjects are more loyal and dutiful than Dissenters—and that however we may consider the honourable houses of Lords and Commons as competent to judge in matters of civil legislation, yet we must think, that to judge of "the things of the Spirit of God" is without their province; and that direction, influence, and control, originating from them, must prove injurious to a kingdom, a *spiritual* kingdom, that "is not of this world"—to "the Church of the living God." Nor does that "Church of the living God" NEED such direction, influence, and control; for Christ, the great Head of the Church, has left such instructions, as to her faith, worship, government, discipline, and practice, as will, with the aid of our reason and common sense, and the inward grace of the Holy Spirit, under the superintendence of its Pilot, guide the vessel safely through all the storms of life, until she has reached her desired haven above. Far, far better than the civil power, the worldly power, has hitherto guided her! Ah, trust her to

her infinitely skilful Pilot, to her map, and to her compass, and to her own internal organization, and the heavenly wind of the Holy Spirit will waft her safely into port, without such worldly interferences.

And does the reader feel the force of this argumentation? What will he think of the civil power *modelling the government of the Church*, this "spiritual kingdom," according to the government of the worldly Roman empire, as shown before? Oh, sad origination of the corruptions of the Church of Rome, from which our Queen Elizabeth would not suffer the Church of England to be sufficiently purged! And sad continuance too of this polity in the Church of England. Dr. Owen, once Vice-chancellor in the University of Oxford, during the Commonwealth, in his work on the "Nature of a Gospel Church and its Government," has expressed it so truly, and so much in harmony with Dr. Cave, as before stated, that we cannot refrain from giving it to the reader. Says he, "It was the Roman empire under one monarch, in its civil distributions for rule and government, which gave the first rise and occasion unto a pretended visibly ruling catholic church, under one spiritual monarch,* distributed into those that were patriarchal, diocesan, metropolitical, and others of inferior kinds. For, retaining the people in their civil distributions, whereinto they were cast according to the polity and interest of the empire, there were ecclesiastical officers assigned unto each distribution, answerable unto the civil officers which were ordained in the polity of the empire. So, in answer unto deputies, exarchs, prefects, governors of provinces and cities, there were found out and erected, patriarchs, metropolitans, diocesans, in various allotments of territories and powers, requiring unto the complete state one visible monarchical head, as the empire had, which was the Pope. And, whereas the emperors had not only a civil

* Here, indeed, he differs; as he has respect to the Pope as a head, which headship is now transferred to the king or queen.

rule and power, but a *military* also, exercised under them by legates, generals, tribunes, centuries, and the like, so there was raised an *ecclesiastical* militia, in various orders of monks, friars, and votaries of all sorts; who, under their immediate generals and prefects, did depend absolutely on the sovereign power of the new ecclesiastical monarch. So was the visible church moulded and fashioned into an image of the old Roman pagan empire, as it was foretold it should be in Rev. xiii. 14, 15. And, although this image was first framed in compliance with it, and for a resemblance of it, yet, in process of time, it substituted itself entirely in the room of the empire, taking all its power unto itself, and doing all its works."* Is the Church of England purged from this corruption in its polity and government? And was all this according to the will of God? And can we Dissenters, if we would be loyal subjects to the Great King, accede to, or countenance and support, a system thus worldly in its structure, in its operation, and in its tendency?

And then, to *establish* this frame of government, together with a certain creed, a certain form of worship, and a certain mode of discipline, to the exclusion of all Christians who cannot conscientiously conform to it—is this the will of God? Much less can it be so, when, under this establishment, its ministers are, if not *de jure*, yet *de facto*, chosen by worldly authority for worldly ends, and supported and rewarded by worldly emoluments and preferments, if the laws which are to govern their conduct is to be made by the world, and a worldly *animus* supplies its strength and vigour! Such a system we Dissenters cannot think to be according to the mind and will of God; nor do we find in the written word of God any warrant for any man, or any earthly government, to assume to itself the power of *establishing* any scheme of government whatever. God has promised to establish his church; he states who are to be its ministers, what is to be their support; he gives it laws; he has pre-

* Owen's Nature of a Gospel Church and its Government, p. 420.

scribed its forms of worship and modes of discipline, and settled its truths in his word, and has left it to his *church* to regulate their faith and manners according to it; and not left it to the world to establish this or that particular system. Oppose then such a procedure we must; loyalty to God, even regard to his authority and will, as well as jealousy for his glory, require it.

To establish it as a *monopoly* too! What is the language of the Established Church of England? "Here are our churches, our pulpits, our benefices, and indeed our emoluments, to the amount of six millions of sterling money, at our disposal, but all is our own. The churches, the pulpits, the benefices, the emoluments, and the other privileges attached, are ours, and ours alone. You, O Dissenters! have no right to touch them, however pious, however learned you are, however competent you are to 'feed the flock of God:' come in, conform to us, as to our faith, worship, government, discipline, and practice, and you shall share with us; but if not, remember that there is a wall of partition between us and you." But what Scripture warrant is there for such a monopoly as this? Is it the will of God that thus it should be with Christians who, *as far as they are Christians*, are "one body and one spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling; who submit to "one Lord," hold "one faith," have experienced "one baptism" of the Spirit, and have "one God and Father"? Assuredly not: neither this MONOPOLY nor this WALL OF PARTITION can be agreeable to his mind.

Is more evidence wanted to prove that such monopoly, that such wall of partition, is the result of our present Church Establishment! Besides the result in ecclesiastical matters, as seen above, look at our civil affairs. It is true, indeed, that by some late Acts of Parliament, Dissenters from this establishment are eligible to civil offices "*de jure*," (by right,) yet are they elected to them "*de facto*," or in fact? Look at the throne, look at the privy council, look at the

ministers of state, look at the House of Lords, look at the House of Commons, look at our lord-lieutenants, at our judges, at our sheriffs, at our magistracy—where are the Dissenters? Nay, are they not, in the present day, in some places, excluded from our public charities even, because they are Dissenters? We leave men of knowledge and observation to answer. Again, therefore, and finally, we repeat the questions—Is all this in harmony with the will of God, the Great King? And does not loyalty to the Great King require us to dissent from such a system and state of things?

PRIMITIVE PURITY :

WHO MAY BEST LAY CLAIM TO IT,

THE DISSENTER OR THE CHURCHMAN?

BEING AN EXAMINATION OF

THE ORIGINAL AND TRUE MEANING OF THE WORDS

"DIOCESE," "PARISH," "THE CHURCH,"

"THE HOLY CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH,"

AND PARTICULARLY OF

"BISHOP, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS,"

AND

"SUCCESSION OF BISHOPS,"

AS

The Peculiar Boast of the Church of England.

Ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἱερεῖς
ἵσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνοματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς — "Our Apostles knew by our
Lord Jesus Christ that there would be contention about the *name of the*
bishop." *Clement, Epist. I. ad Corinth., p. 54 in "King."*

SUNDRY NAMES AND OFFICES

IN CONNEXION WITH

The Church of England,

TRACED TO THEIR ORIGINAL IMPORT.

Who can adequately conceive of the mischief that has accrued to "the Church of the living God," from the abuse of words, and from the changes and corruptions that have taken place as to their meaning? It reminds us of an ancient church, perhaps twelve hundred years old, lately discovered at Pernamzabuloe, buried in sand; or of coins and medals, which, in course of time, have contracted so much rust, that you can scarcely discern their true expression. Well, as this ancient church has been cleared of the sand that buried it, and as one would attempt to scour off the rust from the coin or the medal, so will we proceed with regard to these abused words and names. And, in doing this, we shall be taking example from our blessed Lord, who, in reply to a remark on a prevailing abuse, said, "From the *beginning* it was not so."

We hear or read of a certain *diocese*, and we conceive of one or more counties, comprising, perhaps, a hundred parishes—a "*parish*" is mentioned, and we form an idea of a district of country containing from one thousand to a hundred thousand inhabitants—we speak of "the *church*," and we think either of the parish church, or the Church of England—we talk of

"*bishops*," and we attach no other idea to them than that they have oversight of a diocese, and all its clergy—we speak of "*priests*," and these are the officiating clergy, at least, such as have priests' orders; and of "*deacons*," as those who officiate in the church as priests, but yet have not priests' orders. To the "*Holy Apostolic Church*," some, especially in our day, would attach the idea of the Church of England, or the Church of Rome—of "*bishops, priests, and deacons*," and of a "*succession of bishops*," as giving to the Church of England a peculiar claim. But the conceptions usually entertained concerning these several appellations are abuses of their original meaning—yea, it is not too much to say, that they are delusions! They mislead men; and until the mistakes are rectified, for aught appears, there will be no end of the controversy between Churchmen and Dissenters, and the truth of God will not prevail! Can anything evince more strongly the importance, and even necessity, of the disquisition before us? We shall take the words separately; and in discussing each word or term, we shall have recourse to such testimonies as our opposers cannot dispute. Should we be successful, we shall then see, that we, as Dissenters, have a right to the claim we make, of having, not only the Scripture, but research into antiquity and truth, on our side. Our first inquiry shall be concerning

"THE DIOCESE."

Sir Peter King, afterwards Lord King, in his "*Impartial Inquiry*," says, that he does not remember that ever he found in any writings of the first ages the word "*diocese*" used in its present sense.* Certainly he could not, as divided into "*archdeaconries, each archdeaconry into rural deaneries, and every deanery divided into parishes*."† No! things have

* This writer made such a research into the writings of the first three centuries, that, it is said, he has not less than two thousand quotations from them.

† Blackstone, vol. i. p. 111.

become greatly altered, not only from the sense of Scripture,—in fact, our only safe guide,—but from the state of things in the primitive and apostolic age; and this, in no small degree, from the unhappy fact, insisted on before, of the Church being modelled in its polity after that of the Roman empire, from a part of whose polity the very word “diocese” appears to have been taken.*

There was not any such thing in existence in the first age of Christianity as the Anglican Church diocese, much less of such dioceses. No; in the anticipation of ever so great an increase of the kingdom of Christ, an apostle would never have thought of a diocese so extensive as that above mentioned, much less of a diocese that should include the oversight of hundreds of churches—a diocese such as that of London, comprehending its two millions of inhabitants, and, until of late, all the churches and Christians in our foreign possessions. The fact is, that, in the first hundred years of the Christian era, the bishop had superintendence over only the district, or circuit, or locality where the people of his charge dwelt, called his *παροικία*, or living near his house, or where the household of God met for worship; though afterwards, as Christianity extended, so his oversight extended, till it might extend to the villages around. Another fact is, that over a church, in the first hundred years, there was not only one presiding bishop, but several other bishops, or presbyters, or elders, which, in more modern times, have been called his clergy; and these, by joining with him in the propagation of Christianity, assisted in extending the sphere of his oversight. So it appears to have been in this country; and, in this way, it is easy to conceive how there might have been, from early times, just so many, and no more bishopricks; for there is reason to believe, that in Augustine’s time—the monk who came over to Britain with his forty brethren, to christianize our Saxon ancestors, about the year 600—the whole population of the country was not more than a

* Blackstone, vol. i. p. 111.

million and a-half: and, considering that of these million and a half, only a part, and perhaps a small part, would be converted to Christianity, the oversight of these bishops would be much of the same extent, and of the same nature, as that just before represented. Nor, if we consider that about three hundred years after Christ, the Christian church was modelled in its polity after the polity of the Roman empire, can we wonder that the oversight of the bishop, or its locality, should be called a "diocese." Nor would we quarrel with the word, provided it was limited to a locality that admitted of individual oversight. Alas, that the words "diocese" and "bishop" should have become so prodigiously extended, as not only to have lost its original meaning, but to have become so injurious to the cause of pure and unadulterated Christianity! That which was originally a *παροικία*, a "parish," the locality of only one congregation of Christians, is now, and for many hundred years has been, a "diocese" so called, the locality of hundreds of congregations!

Our conclusion, then, is, that there were no dioceses, in the English sense of the term, in the first and purest ages of Christianity, but only parishes, "*παροικία*" as they were then called, from *παρά*, by or near, and *οικος* or *οικία*, house or household, and that when, afterwards, "dioceses" were spoken of, they were considered as enlargements of "parishes," which perhaps will appear more fully when we come to treat of "parishes." In confirmation of the above we allege the following passages from the learned Selden. Speaking of the time of Augustin, he says, "Parishes were then limited only in regard of the ministering presbytery (whence they were called circuits), within which the priests exercised their shriving; for the whole diocese (first of Canterbury, then of the other elder bishopricks, as they were instituted) was indeed the only limited parish." Here observe, first, that the "diocese" or bishoprick was *only* the "parish;" and secondly, that they are used synonymously. And as to the extent of

this "diocese," "bishoprick," or "parish," it seems, it was such as that "the bishop and his family"—meaning the presbytery or priests that served the church in that locality—"LIVED *together*," the latter having "a residence with the bishop." And that the bishop's diocese or parish was *one* parish only appears from this, that—"In the Council of Hertford, held under Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, one canon is—'That none of the bishops should invade the *parish* of another, but should be contented with the government of the people entrusted to him.'"^{*} He also speaks of a "province being divided into five parishes," and which he calls "bishopricks," meaning, that the bishoprick and the parish were the same, and that a bishop being over a bishoprick and over a parish was the same thing. Blackstone also considers "parish" and "diocese"[†] to have been originally the same in this island.

The inferences, then, that we are led to draw from the above are—first, That what were called "dioceses" some hundred years after Christ, were not so called in the first or apostolic age; and, secondly, That "dioceses" in the present acceptation of the word did not exist at all in that age.

We pass on now to

PARISHES.

We said just now, that that which was the locality or residence of one congregation of Christians, was called a "parish," and so it was; and very properly, from the etymology of the word, as before given. Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian of the fourth century, understood it so down to his time. Nay, Sir Peter King says, that it "is so applied in several hundred places." Hence we read there "of the parish in Ephesus," (Τῆς ἐν Ἐφεσῶν παροικίας)—"of the parish of the Corinthians," (Τῆς Κορινθίων παροικίας)—"of

^{*} The words are, "Ut nullus episcoporum parochiam invadat sed contentus sit gubernatione creditæ sibi plebis."—Selden, pp. 252—257.

Blackstone, vol. i. p. 111.

the parish of the Athenians," (Τῆς Ἀθηναίων παροικίας)—"of the parish of Carthage," (Τῆς κατὰ Καρχηδόνα παροικίας)—by which we may understand, as he observes, a competent number of Christians dwelling near together, having one bishop, pastor, or minister, set over them, with whom they all met at one time to worship and serve God. "This," adds he, "may be evinced from the intent of the word itself, which signifies, a dwelling one by another, as neighbours do."* See also the circular epistle of the church of Smyrna concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp. The inscription runs thus:—"The church of God which is at Smyrna to the church of God which is at Philadelphia, and to all the other *parishes* (παροικίαις) of the holy catholic church in every place, and love from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied."

But how is this word extended now? It includes now, not only the attendants at the house of God, or professed worshippers, but also all the inhabitants of the parish so called, although never entering a place of worship, or even infidels. Moreover, without regard to the increase of population in the course of so many hundreds of years, or altered circumstances, it comprehends within its bounds inhabitants from a thousand to a hundred thousand. The parishes, then, that now exist, are not such as existed in the primitive church, and are not such, in numerous cases, as will admit of that oversight which the very expression itself involves in it. Therefore, why should the word, in such sense of it, be retained? Would it not be better for every minister, whether clergyman or Dissenter, to consider those that come to receive instruction from him, in their several abodes; as his "parish"—the *people*, his church—the places of their abode, his parish? Let every preacher of the gospel gather his congregation or church, and let the places of their residence be his parish; and that without any interference of the

* Vol. i. p. 22.

civil power; and then will things be restored to the state in which they were in the primitive church.

Thus would we clear away the sand—thus would we scour off the rust words have contracted, and give them their true expression—their original meaning.

“ THE CHURCH.”

“ I am going to church,”—“ I belong to the church,” — “ You are going to the chapel or the meeting,” or it may be to the “ conventicle,”—“ You belong to the chapel,” &c. But whence these distinctive or exclusive forms of speech? They are not justified by Scripture, or by primitive antiquity. Wherever the people of God, and the word and ordinances are administered, there is “ the church,” whether in the manner of, or whether resorted to, by churchmen or dissenters. Hence it was not without reason that Dr. Watts, though a dissenter, entitled his paraphrase on the 122nd Psalm, “ Going to Church,” as referring, doubtless, to a dissenting place of worship, as well as to one of the establishment.

We said that such distinctions were not justified by Scripture; for, as to the *place* of meeting, we find, that wherever the “ saints and faithful brethren ” assembled, that there was “ a church; ” for thus the apostle. Speaking of the Corinthians “ coming together into one place,” he calls it “ coming together in the church; ” and that place might be a “ *house*.” Indeed, in no less than five places in the epistles do we find mention of “ a church in a house.” And as to the people constituting a church, and who might be said to “ belong ” to it, who were they? Those were considered as belonging to the church who were called “ out of the world ” —“ believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God,” and believed *on* him accordingly, and so learnt of him as their Prophet; relied on his sacrifice as their Priest; walked, or engaged to walk, sincerely in all his commandments and ordi-

nances as their King; enlisted themselves under his banner, as their Captain of salvation; became his patients, as their Physician; and followed him as the Shepherd—these, joining together in Christian fellowship, were “a church,” according to Scripture. And so they still are, whether meeting in the church, or chapel, or meeting-house, so called.

But much is said in the present day about “the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.” Hence we give it a distinct section, and after we have shown what Scripture says of that also, we shall advert to primitive antiquity.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

“Catholic,” as universal—“Apostolic,” as by apostolic order, or in the apostolic times. Many in the present day, have very confined, exclusive, and injurious notions of this church. The church of Rome insist upon it that theirs is the only true church, thus considered, and great numbers of the church of England, while they admit that the Romish church is of this Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, yet seem to consider themselves only as the other branch of it, excluding Dissenters, and those of different denominations! But they have neither Scripture nor primitive antiquity on their side;—not Scripture, for that considers the church to be—as indeed the word *ἐκκλησία* imports—all that are called out of the world by, and “sanctified in, Christ Jesus,” and who “in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” These, unquestionably, are the persons whom the Apostle Paul considers as constituting “the church of the living God;” or, if you will, the “Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church,” built upon the truths declared by “the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.” Of this church he thus speaks—“There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Yes, all these are "one—one in Christ Jesus." And, of course, he would have us to consider these Ephesians, to whom he thus expressed himself, as belonging to this one body and this Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;—yes, though they had only "*elders*," or "*bishops and deacons*," as was the case with the church at Philippi—we say, "*only bishops and deacons*," for when at Miletus Paul called for the leaders of the church at Ephesus, he is said to have called for "*the elders*" of the church only, whom he afterwards called bishops (*επισκοπους*). Nor is there any mention of "*bishops, priests, and deacons*," on which so much stress is now laid, as though it were necessary to the existence of what may be called "*a church*." And, by the way, was there a bishop, priest, and deacon in each of the five churches, in so many houses, adverted to before? Away, then, with the restrictive, uncharitable notion that the societies of the different dissenting bodies are no churches, because they are not under the government of "*bishops, priests, and deacons*" of the kind they intend. Away with it, because it is not only not warranted, but is contrary to the whole current of Scripture. And we will still maintain, that all those persons of the description mentioned in our last section, whether Churchmen or Dissenters, and of whatever denomination they may be among men, are, with all "*the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven, the true Holy Catholic Apostolic Church*."

Having shown what the Scripture says concerning churches in particular, and "*the church*" as "*Catholic*" or collectively considered, we will turn to primitive antiquity.

In every city, town, or village where Christians of the description above-mentioned assembled for attendance on the word and ordinances with their "*bishops and deacons*," as at Philippi, there was a "*church*." Hence Irenæus: "*That church which is any place, (Ea quæ est in quoque loco ecclesia.)*" And when Dionysius of Alexandria was banished to Cephro in Lybia, he writes, using this expression—"There came so many Christians unto him, that even

there he had a church." (Πόλλη συνεπέδημσεν ἡμῖν ἐκκλησία.) Nay, Tertullian says—'Where there are three, there is a church, (Ubi tres ecclesia.)' And thus we read of the church in Smyrna, the church in Antioch, &c., in the Epistles of Ignatius. And Lord King, in his "Inquiry," shows that, in the first two or three centuries, the whole of the charge or bishopric was but one congregation—that is, one church. Nay, the infidel historian Gibbon bears testimony, that in the first ages, "every society formed within itself a separate and independent republic, and that these little states maintained a mutual, as well as friendly intercourse by letter and deputations." All the places quoted before under the section, "Parishes," might be brought forward as evidence that all bodies of Christians residing in different places were in the primitive times called "churches," and that no such distinctions were made then as now. Why, then, such expressions, "I am going to church,"—"You are going to chapel, or meeting,"—"I belong to the church, but you belong to the Dissenters, or, perhaps, to the sectaries"? Dr. Watts was right, then, when he designates Dissenters going to their "meeting-house"—the term then used among Dissenters—as "going to church." Both Scripture and primitive antiquity approve of it.

Primitive antiquity, as well as Scripture, would call the Dissenters' Society "a church," provided they are "built upon one foundation that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," and "have the Spirit of Christ." They belong also to the "Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church," according to primitive antiquity.

In the earliest writers, we have such expressions as these. Polycarp, when he was seized by his murderers, prayed for "all the catholic church throughout the world."* (Πασης τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας.) Says Irenæus—"The church scattered throughout the whole world to the ends of

* Apud Euseb. in King, p. 3.

the earth," (Ἡ ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης εἰς πρῶτων τῆς γῆς διεσπαρμένη.) And other places. Now, did these intend to *exclude* those who had "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to all the saints"—a designation by which the Apostle Paul seems to love to distinguish the Christians—or did these writers intend to *include* them? Certainly, the latter. They knew nothing of excluding persons from membership in the church of Christ, because they did not submit to a "diocesan bishop," and to several orders of clergymen, under the names of "rectors, vicars, and curates."

But, as so much is said about "bishops, priests, and deacons" as being necessary to an organized church, and by some, even to "a church" at all, we shall carefully examine into these offices. We pass on, then, to

BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS.

In the early epistles of the first writers now remaining, Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians has the precedence. In this epistle there is mention made, as in Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, of "bishops and deacons," but none of "priests," as distinguished from these. Indeed, the presbyter was a bishop, and the bishop a presbyter, or elder, in those days. So that, possibly, the presbyter or presbyters might be included in the word "bishops;" for since the word "bishop" (ἐπισκοπος) simply means an *overseer*, all bishops, presbyters, or elders might, with propriety, be called by the common name of "bishops," because the business of them all was to "take heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers to feed the church of God." Hence, also, they were called "pastors." And, indeed, it appears most clearly, from several passages of the New Testament, compared in the Greek, that "bishops," "elders," or presbyters, and "pastors," are synonymous.

But, before the closing of the canon of Scripture, was there amongst these "bishops" of a church a *first* bishop, or a

presiding bishop? If we may consider as authority the postscripts of the epistles, it would appear, from those affixed to the Second Epistle to Timothy, and that to Titus, that there was so. And, perhaps, the argument would acquire strength from our Lord's addressing the "angel" of each of the seven churches, as in the book of Revelations; but the authority of these postscripts has been called in question; and as to the word "angel," although from chap. ix. of the Apocalypse, and particularly from the eleventh verse, we might infer that that word "angel" was designed to convey the idea of a ruler, or head, yet we are left in doubt whether it intended such a one, or, indeed, an individual person at all. However, coming down to the time of Ignatius and Polycarp—who had been the disciples of John the Apostle, and who wrote, the former about twenty years after the Apostle John, and the latter about fifty years after—we find constant mention in their epistles of "bishop, presbyters, and deacons," as existing in the churches. Thus Ignatius to the Magnesians—"Seeing that I have been judged worthy to see you by Damas, your most excellent bishop, and by your very worthy presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius, and by my fellow-servant, Sotio, your deacon." Again, "Your bishop, presiding in the place of God, your presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles, and your deacons most dear to me." "Your bishop, and those who preside over you." "Neither do ye anything without your bishop and presbyters." "Your most worthy bishop, and the well wrought crown of your presbytery, and your deacons, which are according to God."

Ignatius to the Trallians:—"Without your bishop, you should do nothing; also, be subject to your presbyters." "The bishop, and presbyters, and deacons." "Fare ye well in Jesus Christ, being subject to your bishop as to the command (of God), and so likewise to the presbytery."

Ignatius to the Philadelphians:—"The bishop, and the presbyters who are with him, and the deacons appointed

according to the mind of Jesus Christ." "There is one bishop, together with his presbyters, and the deacons, my fellow-servants." "Attend to the bishop, and the presbytery, and the deacons." "Do nothing without the bishop."

Ignatius to the Smyrneans:—"Follow your bishop as Jesus Christ, the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles: as to the deacons, reverence them as the command of God. Let no man do anything of what belongs to the church without the bishop." "I salute your very worthy bishop, and your valuable presbytery, and your deacons, my fellow-servants."

Ignatius to Polycarp. He writes to him, as "bishop of the church which is at Smyrna, their overseer, but himself overlooked by God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Their bishop, with their presbyters and deacons."

Polycarp to the Philippians. The only expression he uses is this—"Being subject to the priests and deacons." What, was there no bishop? or were they, as when the Apostle Paul wrote to them, with "bishops and deacons" only? Nor is there any mention of these orders in the account of his martyrdom.

Reverting to these testimonies, we are led to remark—

1. That whatever might be the oversight or business of these "bishops, presbyters, and deacons," they belonged to ONE CHURCH, or assembly of Christians. Nor have we any reason to suppose that the whole aggregate of the Christians in those places would amount to more than the aggregate of some of our dissenting churches or congregations. Moreover, that the number of the office-bearers might not be greater than of our office-bearers, particularly in the churches of the Magnesians and Trallians. This idea is confirmed by the consideration, that when the primitive writers speak of the Christians in any kingdom or province, they speak in the plural number, as "the churches of Cilicia," "the churches that were in Germany, Spain, France, the East, Egypt, and Lybia:" not as we do here, "the church

of England. 2. That they were SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT churches, and ruled by no other than their own office-bearers; for when Clement, or Ignatius, or Polycarp writes to them, it appears so, and there is no assumption of authority. Indeed, Gibbon, as before quoted, so testifies. 3. That the church was not more extensive than that it would admit of INDIVIDUAL oversight by these office-bearers, and that the bishops and presbyters had no more power than such individual oversight would give them. Besides the extracts above given, all which indicate so much, we add the following from Sir Peter King's "Inquiry." After a great number of Greek and Latin quotations from the early writers, he shows, that a church consisted of "one single congregation, where all the people met together at one time, prayed together, received the sacrament together, assisted at church censures together, and dispatched church affairs together." And as to the bishop's oversight, says Ignatius to the Smyrnæans, "Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude be," ("Ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος.") "Let there be nothing done without the bishop," ("ἔστω οὐκ ἔξω ἐστιν χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου.") "either to baptize or to administer the agape, but whatsoever he may judge right, (ἀλλ' ὃ ἂν ἐκεῖνος δοκιμάσῃ.) And the same Ignatius, writing to Polycarp, exhorts him to "seek all by name," ("Ἐξ ὀνόματος πάντας ζητεῖς)—"not to overlook or exalt himself over the men servants and maid servants," (Δούλους καὶ δούλας μὴ υπερηφανεῖ.) And then he shows, that even 265 years after Christ, the church of Antioch met in one house, called "the house of the church," τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας οἴκου.) Also, of the church of Rome, at the death of Anterius, it is said, "all the brethren met together in the church," (Ἀδελφῶν ἀπάντων ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας συγκεκορημένων.) And Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, hath this expression, "That I might know very well every one," (Ut omnes optimè nossem.) And the same Cyprian says, "We celebrate the sacrament, the whole brotherhood being present." Such, then, was the extent of even these churches—such was the

extent of the bishops' oversight. 4. These bishops and presbyters were "over them in the Lord"—lived amongst them, fed them, watched over them, administered the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper to them, and exercised discipline amongst them. 5. That these bishops, &c., were appointed with the consent and suffrage of the people. The following passage is from Clement's epistle to the Corinthians:—"So likewise our apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should contentions arise upon the account of the ministry. And, therefore, having a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said, and then gave direction how, when they should die, other chosen and approved men should succeed in their ministry. Wherefore, we cannot think that those may justly be thrown out of their ministry, who were either appointed by them, or afterwards chosen by eminent men, with the consent of the whole church." The passage to which allusion is made in the above quotation is this. Speaking of the apostles, "They went abroad, publishing that the kingdom of God was at hand." And thus preaching through countries and cities, and proving by the Spirit the first fruits of their conversion, they appointed out of them bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, seeing that long before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place, "I will appoint their overseers in righteousness, and their ministers in faith," Isaiah, lx. 17.* Cyprian was elected bishop of Carthage "by the favour of the people," (*plebis favore*), and he appeals to them that, in clerical ordinations, they used to consult the people before, and to weigh in common council the manners "and merits of every candidate." And Cyprian himself acknowledges, "that he was chosen by the suffrage of all the people," (*populi universi suffragio*.) And he says, indeed, that from the time he became a bishop, he resolved to do

* Wake's *Apostol. Fath*, pp. 60 and 57 and 58.

nothing without the consent of the people. All the people met together in the church, to choose a successor to Anterus at Rome, when they chose Fabianus; and as Fabianus, so his successor, Cornelius, was ordained by the suffrage of the clergy and people, (*cleri ac plebis suffragio ordinato.*) An African Synod, held in the year 258, determined that their ordination should be by the judgment and suffrage of all.* Nor was the practice abolished until the council of Laodicea, in the year 368.† 6. There was no such distinction made as is now made between presbyters and bishops. That they originally had one and the same name, appears from Paul's inscription of his Epistle to the Philippians, where he uses the expression, "bishops and deacons," as also from his address to the elders or presbyters of Ephesus, as bishops, (*ἐπισκοπους.*) It appears, also, from the fact, that, when in his Epistle to Titus, he would state the qualification of church leaders, the very officers he had called "presbyters," or elders, he in the same connexion calls "bishops." Clement, in his epistle, too, speaks only of bishops and deacons, from whence, also, it would appear, that of these leading office-bearers now in view, he considered them as alike "bishops." Polycarp, too, exhorts the people to be subject to their presbyters and deacons—doubtless, considering presbyters as bishops, overseers of the flock; for, indeed, such was their *business*, as well as their name, as by numerous extracts might be shown; but we forbear. 7. They were not men of great *revenues*, and who occupied *palaces*, or were called *lords*.

Now, upon a review of what has been said on this office of "bishop," or these offices of "bishop, priest, and deacons," as considered by some as necessary to the true church, allow us to ask—Were they not officers of one church? Was there any interference of the bishop of one church over the bishop of another, or of one church over another church? Was there any bishop whose power extended beyond his individual

* See King's "Inquiry," in several places.

† Hanmer's Eusebius, p. 586.

oversight? Did not the bishop live among his flock, as well as the presbyters, and watch over them, and feed them? Was there ever a bishop in the first churches who was appointed without the suffrage of the people, or any presbyter? Was there that difference which now exists between bishop and presbyters? Nay, even in England, hundreds of years after Christ, the bishop and his presbyters lived together as one family. Were they *lord* bishops, living in *palaces*, with great revenues, and seldom *preaching*? And, lastly, upon what ground is the expression changed from "the bishops, *presbyters*, and deacons," to "bishop, *priests*, and deacons?" Alas! how are things altered from their original state? Where, then, were bishops with a hundred churches under their supervision, with their archdeaconries, deaneries, and parishes under them? Where, then, were bishops, rectors, vicars, curates, without the suffrage of the people? Where bishops living far away, and unacquainted with the churches? Oh, fatal error of modelling the government of a community *not* of this world, after the government of an empire of this world! Better for every church to have its own "bishops and deacons," who live amongst them, and are acquainted with local circumstances, than to be under the direction, influence, and control of one who can know neither the individuals nor the local circumstances. And, provided the people have a free use of the Scripture, and there be a free press for the circulation of thought, we have, under the care of Christ, the great Head of the Church, no reason to fear for the result. At least, we must anticipate that the result would be far better than it has proved to be under the direction, influence, and control of worldly kings and kingdoms.

For the "priests and deacons," we have "rectors, vicars, curates, and churchwardens;" but what need have we of these distinct offices, if we abide by the Scripture order of "bishops and deacons," as at Philippi? And primitive antiquity will not favour such divisions, which, after all that has been said, it is needless to prove. Let every church have its bishops

and deacons, and let its officers be so denominated, and let them perform the duties, and enjoy the advantages of their respective offices, and it would be more conformable to the will of Christ, and to the usages of the first hundred years after Christ. But, not to dwell here, there is one thing we must notice, and particularly, because we conceive that popular suffrage is the great *conservative* of the purity of the church—that, in the appointment to these offices in the church of England *the people have no voice!* Alas! patrons of livings, oftentimes worldly men, who know not, and receive not “the things of the Spirit of God,” have the direction and influence here of spiritual concerns; and the people are precluded from “trying the spirits whether they be of God,” and of “proving all things,” though these are apostolical injunctions!

“DEACONS.”

From Scripture, it appears that their office was appointed to “serve tables,” or to “minister” to the temporal wants of the church; and so, from the writings of the first hundred years after Christ. In these writings, they are almost uniformly mentioned after the “bishops and presbyters;” but remarkable it is, that when the writers exhort to submission and obedience, they confine it to these bishops and presbyters, leaving out the deacons, whom they call “ministers:” we suppose, because their business was to minister to the saints and to the church, in such things as they had need. And that they did so, we have most early testimony. Ignatius intimates that they were “deacons of meats and cups;” and so low down as the time of Origen, they were, as he himself tells us, “dispensers of the churches’ money.” They were, as Ignatius says, “the churches’ servants;” and constituted, as Eusebius observes, “for the service of the public.”

But were they a distinct order of preachers, as in the church of England? They might *become* preachers, as Philip the Deacon is afterwards called “Philip the Evan-

gelist;" but there is no evidence that this was the *work* of their order, or that they were originally designed for it. Is not this, then, another instance of departure from original purity, and does it not militate against the doctrine of "bishops, priests, and deacons," as the "three orders of clergy"?

Much less can we find in Scripture, or in the first hundred years after Christ, the following list of officers belonging to his church—"archbishops, archdeacons, deacons, prebendaries, rectors, vicars, curates, canons, minor canons, chancellors, vicars general, commissaries, officials, surrogates, proctors; with the king at their head.* And would there have been any NEED of them if the scriptural plan had been retained—if the church had not been corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ?"

CONCLUDING QUERIES.

Is not a Dissenting *church* more like a New Testament and Primitive church, consisting of those who profess to be sanctified in Christ Jesus, than a church belonging to the Establishment? And is not such a church more worthy of being considered as a branch of the "Holy Catholic Apostolic Church," than the Establishment churches?

2. Is not the *government* of a Dissenting church more in harmony with the first churches than is that of the churches in connexion with the Established church? and is it not more conducive to discipline and good order?

3. Is not the minister or pastor of the Dissenting church the proper scriptural *bishop* of it? and is not his oversight the very oversight of the bishops of the first churches?

4. Is there any mention, for the first hundred years after Christ, *of any other* bishop? much less of a bishop who did not live with the flock, feed them, watch over them, and constantly preach to them, and administer to them the ordinances?

* Palmer's Catechism, p. 38.

5. When, at length, the bishop's superintendence began to be extended to what was called a more extended parish, or diocese, was it not still a diocese that would admit of his *immediate*, or, at least, *real* superintendence, and as in connexion with his brother presbyters or bishops, who lived with him as a family?

6. Were not these bishops, until the council of Laodicea, more than three hundred years after Christ, chosen with the *suffrage of the people*?

7. Were the New Testament and primitive bishops so *secular*? did they keep up such costly establishments? had they such immense revenues as to be able to amass hundreds of thousands of pounds?

8. Is not the practical working truly shocking?*

Then, finally, for the

SUCCESSION OF BISHOPS.

A succession of bishops to take oversight of his churches, the Great Head of the Church would take care to provide. It was promised in the Old Testament—"This is my cove-

* In the parliamentary papers of 1830, containing the diocesan returns of the number and stipends of curates in England and Wales, it is shown that, out of 4254 curates, there were 1639 salaries not exceeding 60*l.* per annum; "and, supposing the stipends of the curates to average the mighty sum of 75*l.* per annum, still their share of the church revenues would amount only to 319,050*l.* Yes; three hundred and nineteen thousand and fifty pounds, out of nine millions, four hundred and fifty-nine thousand pounds"! According to the high authority already cited, "the 26 bishops, 700 dignitaries, and about 4000 non-resident incumbents, principally belonging to the aristocracy, enjoy nearly the whole ecclesiastical revenues, properly computed, amounting to more than NINE MILLIONS"!

"A bishop of Clogher, who having been tutor to Lord Westmoreland, went over to Ireland without a shilling, and continued in his bishopric only some eight years, at the end of which he died, worth between 800,000*l.* and 400,000*l.*;" and Sir John Newport brought it out in the House of Commons, that in the space of the previous fifteen years, three Irish bishops died, leaving to their respective families the enormous sum of 700,000*l.*

nant with them, saith the Lord ; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." That is, " I will raise up men for the instruction of my church to the end of time—men in whom is the Spirit, and who shall speak my words." Yes, not only did the God of Israel, of his church, covenant to raise up one who should " reign over the house of Jacob, and of whose kingdom there should be no end," by the covenant of royalty ; and one who should be " a priest for ever," according to the covenant of the priesthood ; but he here, by a covenant of prophecy, engages to raise up a succession of instructors for his church for the same lengthened period ; and his word has not failed, nor, we believe, ever will fail.

It is provided for, also, in the New Testament ; for not only did our Saviour intimate so much in his last commission concerning the preaching of his gospel, but his servant, the Apostle Paul, gives charge that all things which the evangelists of that day had heard from him, they should " commit to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also ;" and thus the truth would descend from generation to generation, and their instructions, as well as commission, would be found in the written word.

But **WHO** are these men of the succession ? Manifestly those to whom God gives his Spirit, and who speak his words—doubtless, such as are " faithful and able to teach others the mystery of the gospel," " into whose hearts " God has " shined to give the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Such only can properly be the successors of the apostles, to make known " the mystery of the gospel," who, like them, had experienced this " shining," &c. Being charged with the " ministry of reconciliation," as they, like them, they ought to be able to say, " who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." Being *servants* in the kingdom of God, they must be *subjects*, having been " born again,"

"born of the Spirit." Having a commission to "feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," they must be able to appeal to their great Shepherd, saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

This is the "succession of bishops"—these are the "successors of the apostles." Not men "*of the world*," but "*men of God*;" not such as prompted by the "*spirit of the world*," but by "*the Spirit which is of God*;" not men whose objects are worldly respectability, worldly emolument, worldly preferment from worldly patronage; but the glory of God in the salvation of souls.

And since the appeal is so much to the "*fathers*," as they are improperly called, let us appeal to the most ancient of them all, Clement, whose Epistle to the Corinthians is so well known. What says he? Whom does he say the apostles appointed "*bishops and ministers*"? Such as were "*the first fruits of their conversions*." Whom, again? Such as were "*approved men*," and that "*with the consent of the whole church*."* And Clement says, not only that the apostles appointed the first fruits of their conversions to be "*bishops and deacons*," but also directed that, when they died, "*other approved men should be received into the succession, or succeed in their ministry*." "*Ὅπως ἐν κοίμῃθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν.*"† And Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, who suffered martyrdom in the year of our Lord 202, says, "*We can name the men the apostles made bishops in their several churches, appointing them their successors*." And what bishops they were, we have seen.‡

From these testimonies, it appears, then, that they were to be converted men, approved men, or tried and approved men, and appointed with the consent of the whole church. If so, then, we ask, who are the succession, the bishops

* Abp. Wake, p. 60.

† Sir Peter King, p. 95.

‡ Oxford Catechism, p. 17.

amongst the Dissenters, or the bishops of the established church? In fact, there was no succession in the earliest ages, but of such bishops as are among the Dissenters, even bishops of one particular church or congregation; nor was there any one recognised as a *bishop at all* for two or three hundred years after Christ, who had not been approved of by the church of which he was *ἐπίσκοπος*, or overseer. Where, then, is this boasted "Apostolic Succession" as confined to the Church of England? Where, then, is this boasted exclusive "Episcopal Ordination?"—they both vanish away like smoke! The Dissenting ministers are the true *primitive* bishops—the succession, according to its primitive sense, is most clearly with the Dissenters—the regular *primitive* episcopal ordination is with them.

CONCLUSION.

Upon a review of this subject, let the reader judge who has the best claim to primitive purity—the Dissenter or the Churchman. And, if he decide in favour of the former, will he not be ready to inquire, why is the Dissenter so accused as a schismatic? Why is his bishop considered as an intruder, and his people as aliens, or unchurched? Why, as such, is he maltreated, so as that, in many places, he is excluded from the public charities, and at other times refused the rites of burial? How comes it to pass, that, although he is now of late made eligible to public offices, yet, *in fact*, he is not elected to them? Where are the Dissenters amongst our magistrates, our sheriffs, our judges?—where, in the list of our lord-lieutenants?—where, in our House of Commons, or our House of Lords?—where, amongst our ministers of state, or the members of the administration of the government of the land? Whatever they might be "*de jure*," scarcely a Dissenter is to be seen amongst them "*de facto*!"

QUESTION *for the Men of the* "APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION."

Can you give us an *unbroken line* of your bishops, *who, as the apostles*, were *first* "reconciled to God by Jesus Christ," and then took upon them the "ministry of reconciliation"?—who, as the apostles, fed Christ's sheep, having loved him above all?—who, as the apostles, were shepherds on God's account, and not hirelings?—and who, as the apostles, had known by experience God's "shining into the heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," to fit them to declare "the mystery of the gospel"? For the Scripture knows nothing of any other succession; nor did what are called "the apostolic writers."

QUESTIONS *for the Men of the* "EPISCOPAL ORDINATION."

1. What are we to think of all those ordained by such as, not being qualified according to the above apostolic statement of qualifications, were not of the true succession, and, indeed, were not called to be bishops at all, but were intruders?

2. What of those presbyterian ministers in Scotland, until the days of James the First, who had not episcopal ordination at all?

3. What of those who thus became Scotch bishops, but had not episcopal consecration?

4. What of the clergy who were ordained by them?

5. What of the people who were *baptized* by such clergy?

6. What of all the ministers who were not episcopally ordained during the Commonwealth?

7. What of the people who were baptized by those ministers?

8. What of the ministry of the reformed church abroad?

9. What of the people baptized by them?

“WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE”

As to State Power,

STATE SUPPORT, AND STATE GIFTS,

AS THEY RELATE TO

“THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD”?

CHAPTER I.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT AND ITS PRECISE IDEA.

ON entering upon this subject, it might not be amiss to awaken the mind to a sense of its importance. Not to insist upon its being very much the question of the day, we may remark, that from the time of Constantine, the Emperor of Rome, which is now about fifteen hundred years, the true spiritual church has been in danger from a direction, influence, and control, foreign to her spirit and design. In the first instance, from the Roman civil power modelling the church's polity according to its own or the polity of the Roman empire; afterwards, from the papal ecclesiastical power assuming absolute authority over her; and then, at the Reformation, the civil power claiming dominion, making the king the supreme head of the church. This assumed authority, D'Aubigné, author of the work on the Reformation, has well expressed. Speaking of the papacy, he says—"In place of the despotism of the prince, it substituted that of the priest, and often indeed had both prince and priest been by it stirred up against the Christian people. A new emancipation was needed; the sixteenth century produced it. Wherever the Reformation established itself, the yoke of Rome was thrown off, and liberty of conscience restored. Yet," adds he, "there was such a proneness in man to exalt himself above the truth, that even among many Protestant nations of our own time, the church, freed from the arbitrary power of the priest, is

now falling again into subserviency to the civil authority. Thus, like its Divine Founder, is it bandied from one despotism to another, still passing from Caiaphas to Pilate, and from Pilate to Caiaphas.”*

Our business immediately, however, is with the result of the reformation from Popery, when the Church of England renounced the dominion of the papal see. Strikingly was this glorious achievement expressed by Dr. Leifchild, at a meeting of the Voluntary Evangelical Church Association. Speaking of the dominion just mentioned, he asks—“And what lent a check to that tyranny over conscience? What arrested it, and stopped it? One man, urged by the spirit of truth. He said that it was a usurpation,—that God had presented his truth for all mankind to receive and obey it, according to their convictions of its import; and for any power to interfere between him and God, by enactments and secular fines, was treason against revealed truth and its author, and should not be submitted to. This was what was said at the Diet of Worms, on the memorable day when all the kings and princes of Germany and Spain were assembled there, with all the nobles of the land, and the legates of the Pope. He was then asked, Do you stand by the principle you have published, that the Scriptures are the sole and exclusive standard of faith and practice? All eyes were fixed upon him,—there was a breathless silence till he gave his reply; then, meekly and with self-composure, he said, ‘Thou hast rightly interpreted my words. By the supremacy of the Scriptures, against popes and cardinals I take my stand, so help me God.’ Then he added, ‘I would have my body to be torn asunder,—I would suffer my limbs to be hacked off,—but I will not abandon the paramount authority of Scripture.’ One man armed with the Word of God,—one man armed with a Bible, against the power, and pomp, and authority of the world!”

But, alas! other lords have had dominion over the church,

* D'Aubigné, Ref., vol. iii. p. 521.

and still have! And see the *effects* of it in another striking passage in the speech of Sir Culling Eardley Smith, on a similar occasion, at a meeting at Southwark:—"Look," says he, "at the ecclesiastical state of Europe,—take a bird's-eye view of it, and what do we find? The subjects of every country are compelled, under penalties more or less severe, to do that very thing which Christ commanded them not to do,—to be the adherents of a sect. The character of the penalty will vary according to the character of the government. Under an arbitrary government, the penalty will be downright; under a government half free, it will be the surveillance of the police, and a liability to have my chapel closed; in a free country, it will be to lose my caste in society. If I am the subject of Russia, the knout in Siberia will be applied to me, if I endeavour to lead the people from the Greek Church. If I am the subject of Prussia, the Prussian penalty will be applied, if I do not allow the king to mould me to his church. In Denmark, I shall be punished, if I attempt to baptize adults,—this being opposed to the Lutheran Church. In Austria and in Italy, I shall be liable to imprisonment, if I say a word against the Roman-catholic Church. In France, I shall have the police overlooking me, and shall be liable to have my chapel shut up in ten minutes, if I do not belong to the established Roman-catholic or to the Protestant Church. And, even in our own country, where, God be thanked, no man can interfere with us as to holding religious assemblies, yet, even here, to be a dissenter from Episcopacy in the south, or Presbyterianism in the north, is to expose myself to pay taxation for the religion of others, to lose my caste in society, and to incur all the consequences in public opinion which result from departing from the law of the land." Do not all these things attach importance to the subject?

But as we have to do immediately with the state of things in our own country, where the Protestant religion is established by law, under two forms of government,—the Episcopal and the Presbyterian,—we will state the views of both

Episcopalians and Presbyterians in regard to the sort and degree of the direction, control, and influence, which, according to them, the civil government should exercise as to the church of the living God; and hereby we shall have a more precise and comprehensive view of the subject before us. We will begin with the Episcopalian, taking it from Bishop Burnet's statement in his "History of the Reformation of the Church of England."*—"They thus defined the extent of the King's power: To them specially and principally it pertaineth to defend the faith of Christ and his religion, to conserve and maintain the true doctrine of Christ, and all such as be true preachers and setters forth thereof; and to abolish abuses, heresies, and idolatries, and to punish with corporal pains such as of malice be the occasion of the same. And, finally, to oversee and cause that the said bishops and priests do execute their pastoral office truly and faithfully, and specially in those points which by Christ and his apostles was given and committed to them; and in case they shall be negligent in any part thereof, or would not diligently execute the same, to cause them to redouble and supply their lack; and if they obstinately withstand their prince's kind monition, and will not amend their faults, then in such case to put others in their rooms and places. And God hath also recommended the said bishops and priests to obey, with all humbleness and reverence, both kings, and princes, and governors, and all their laws, not being contrary to the laws of God, whatsoever they be; and that not only *propter iram* (for wrath's sake), but also *propter conscientiam* (for conscience' sake)." This appears to have been in 1534, but in 1545 it was enacted, "that archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons, have no manner of jurisdiction but by and under the king's majesty—the only undoubted supreme head of the Church of England."

For an illustration and an exemplification of the above

* Vol. i. p. 142; 2nd edit. fol., 1631.

authority, see "His Majesty's Declaration," before the "Articles of the Church of England" in our large Bibles.

We will now extract, from Turretine, the view which the Presbyterians take of the direction, control, and influence of civil government as to the church, than whom, perhaps, no one could give a more luminous statement. The following is a translation. Speaking of the civil magistrate, he says,—
 "1st. He ought to appoint in the republic the sacred doctrine and pure worship of God, from that which is prescribed in the Word of God; to preserve faithfully that which is ordained, or he ought to restore and reform them when fallen, as appears from the conduct of Asa, Jehosaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Whence we cannot but applaud the pious purpose of princes and Christian magistrates in putting their hand to the Reformation, which was in vain expected from the Roman court, in that they employed all their efforts to cherish and sustain it. 2nd. He ought to protect the church to the utmost, to restrain heretics and the troublers of the church's peace, to promote the glory of God, to defend and propagate the true religion. 3rd. Where it is not, to procure the ministry of the Word and of the sacraments rightly, according to the Word of God; and where it is, to hold it in reverence, and honestly to cherish and protect them; also to open and encourage, as seminaries for the republic and the church, *schools* in which the youth may be instructed and formed. 4th. With all diligence to take care that every one of the ministers of religion perform his duty, encourage the diligent, stir up the indolent, and for that purpose punish delinquents according to ecclesiastical canons or the civil laws. 5th. To see to it that solemn formulas and ecclesiastical constitutions, which define the doctrine and discipline of the church, according to the rule of Scripture, be ordained and preserved sacred. 6th. Authoritatively to appoint the ordinary assemblies of the church in which ecclesiastical affairs concerning doctrine, discipline, and church order, are transacted from the Word of God. And to retain purity of

doctrine, and sanctity of discipline; and, where necessary, in order to determine religious controversies, besides the ordinary assemblies, to convoke provincial and national synods; to moderate their proceedings and judgments by his counsel, which are to be confirmed and defended by his authority.”*

These their views of the bearing of civil government upon the church—perhaps as comprehensive and correct an account of them as any that might be produced—were maintained by the following arguments by the ecclesiastics of those days. The Episcopalian view of the subject is thus stated by Bishop Burnet:—“As for the king’s power over spiritual persons and in spiritual causes,” says he, “they proved it from the scriptures. In the Old Testament, they found the kings of Israel intermeddled in all matters ecclesiastical. Samuel, though he had been judge, yet acknowledged Saul’s authority. So also did Abimeleoh the high priest, and appeared before him when cited upon an accusation. And Samuel says, he was made the head of all the tribes. Aaron, in that, was an example to all the following high priests, who submitted to Moses. David made many laws about sacred things, such as the order of the courses of the priests and their worship; and when he was dying, he declared to Solomon how far his authority extended. He told him that the courses of the priests and all the people were to be wholly at his commandment: pursuant to which, Solomon did appoint them their charges in the service of God, and both the Priests and Levites departed not from his commandment in any matter: and though he had turned out Abiathar from the high priesthood, yet they made no opposition. Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, made likewise laws about ecclesiastical matters. In the New Testament, Christ himself was obedient; he paid taxes, he declared that he pretended to no earthly kingdom, he charged the people to

* Turret. Instit., vol. iii. pp. 357, 358.

render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and his disciples not to affect temporal dominion, as the lords of the nations did. And though the magistrates were then heathens, yet the Apostles wrote to the churches to obey magistrates, to submit to them, to pay taxes : they call the king supreme, and say he is God's minister to encourage them that do well, and to punish the evil doers ; which is said of all persons without exoeption, and every soul is charged to be subject to the higher powers."*

Such were the views of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches concerning the power of the civil government, "quoad sacra," or as to sacred things ; and such the arguments by which they were supported. After the discussions and the history of three hundred years, perhaps we may be able to come to conclusions more satisfactory as we proceed : yet, as a general reply to the arguments above stated, we will make an extract from a work recently published. It is this :† "As to the cases of Samuel and Saul, David and Abimelech, Samuel and Aaron, they appear to acknowledge the king's authority as head of the *people* only, not of the church ; nor do the cases appear relevant. Thus, as to David and Solomon, what they did was by divine commandment. See the passages quoted ; from whence it will also be seen that the latter had acted, as the former, under the character of 'the men of God.' Certainly, then, it cannot be gathered from thence, that kings, not being 'men of God,' are to give laws, and establish things from their own minds. Moreover, both David and Samuel were prophets and priests as well as kings, and so acted as from God. Nor was the order given concerning Abiathar any other than as an order given from a king concerning a rebellious or traitorous subject. Jehosaphat set forward teaching in his kingdom by princes, priests, and Levites, but they 'took the book of the law of the Lord with them' as their authority ; and in his

* Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. i. pp. 140, 141.

† Dissent, pp. 73, 76.

subsequent instructions to the judges, to the priests, and to the Levites, he never intended that they should take any other than the law of the Lord for their rule. Hezekiah exhorted the Levites to their duty, and set forward a reformation; but if he 'commanded,' it was 'by the word of the Lord:' and all that the priests and Levites did in the way of sacrificing, was according to the divine institution; and the commandment of the king and the princes was 'by the word of the Lord.' His appointment of the priests and the Levites too was 'as it is written in the law of the Lord.' In Josiah's reformation, also, care was taken that the courses should be according to the writing of David, King of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son, before divinely inspired, and 'as it is written in the book of Moses.' Now, where in all this do we see anything like authority, such as has been assumed by some of our rulers, to add to Scripture by legislation? Neither Jehosaphat, nor Hezekiah, nor Josiah, would have dared to assume such authority. On the contrary, they all appear solicitous to act according to the law of Moses, and the words of the Lord, in everything. Besides it was 'the kingdom of the Lord in their hands.' As to that part of the argument which is drawn from the New Testament, there is not the least appearance of an earthly king's supremacy over the church of God, to rule it and to legislate for it. Christ obeyed the law, and paid taxes as a subject of the state; and what Christian would not do the same? What Dissenter does not consider it as his duty to 'render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's'? But, then, he thinks it equally his duty to 'render unto God the things that are God's.' Moreover, he thinks it his duty to be subject to the higher powers on earth; but if these higher powers on earth require of him that which is contrary to the will of Him that is 'higher than they,' then he thinks it right that he should obey the latter, even though he command that which is contrary to the command of the former."*

* Dissent, its Character, Causes, &c., pp. 73, 74.

We have now, it is presumed, felt something of the importance of our subject, and have seen something of the nature of the case, and of the views of our Episcopalian and Presbyterian brethren. We will now endeavour, in the light of Scripture, to state the doctrine of Scripture concerning the bearing of the state on the church; or, in other words, propose the question—"WHAT HAS THE WORLD TO DO WITH THE CHURCH? OR WHAT HAVE THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD TO DO WITH THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST?" And first, we will show what we mean by the "church," and that it is the kingdom of Christ; secondly, what is the nature of this kingdom, as contrasted with the kingdoms of the world; thirdly, that the servants of Christ's kingdom are not to be appointed by the state; fourthly, that Christ being, as King, the Lawgiver and Judge in his kingdom, the kings or governments of this world have no power to *legislate* or *judge* in it; fifthly, that far less had they power to model the *polity* of Christ's kingdom according to theirs; sixthly, that less still had they authority to select articles of faith, a certain form of worship, and certain modes of discipline, and *establish them by law*, to the effect of occasioning a *monopoly* and a *wall of partition* between Christians and fellow-subjects. We shall then show what the state may do. Thus far as to STATE POWER. We then shall proceed to STATE SUPPORT: where we propose to show, first, that the church, or kingdom of Christ, is not to look for its SUPPORT to the kingdoms of this world; secondly, that it is neither expedient nor lawful for the state to select a SECTION of the Christian church and support it; thirdly, that the church should not receive even GIFTS from the state, if designed as BRIBES to pervert, or SOPS to quiet; nor, fourthly, is the church to receive them at all from the state, if the state demands in return an *inquisitorial* or *interfering* power. And having thus far stated what the church, or kingdom of Christ, is NOT to expect from the state, or civil governments of this world, we shall endeavour to state clearly—what the Scripture, as well as reason, may teach us—what the church MAY expect from the civil government.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE AS TO STATE POWER.

SECTION I.

Terms "Church" and "State" explained.

IN our inquiries after truth, how important it is to have an accurate conception of the terms used in the discussion ; and perhaps in no discussion will this remark more properly apply than in the one before us. As to the word "STATE," it is, we presume, pretty generally understood as tantamount to "civil government," as relating to the order and welfare of man, as a citizen of this world, and conversant with the things of this world. But the word "CHURCH" is not so well understood. It is usually applied to that class of the community who hold the faith, observe the service, and submit to the government and discipline, prescribed by the civil government, and established by law. Consequently, it is called the "National Church," and "the Church of England ;" and all who do not conform to it are considered as "DISSENTERS," as indeed they properly are : though Dissenters consider themselves as of "the true church" notwithstanding, of the "Church of the living God," in the New Testament sense of the word, and equally so with the "establishment." Indeed, they consider the application of the word to a nation or province as far too general ; seeing that the very word *ἐκκλησία* intimates that they are a people *called out of* nations and provinces ; and that the "rule" of Christ in his church or kingdom is "in the midst of his enemies," distinct from national and worldly rule.

As long, however, as we attach the idea to those professors of some particular creed, or form of worship and government, and call it "the church," we shall obviously draw the con-

clusion, that *that* is the community which is to be regarded ; and consequently, that all other professing Christians are no other than sectarians : and as such, of course, have no claim to regard as "the Church." Of this, abundant evidence has been given in some statistical returns to parliament, of the existing accommodations for public worship.

But *how* are we to ascertain what *is* the true church ? Unquestionably from the Scripture ; and to it the Church of England herself refers us in her sixth article, which runs thus :—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation ; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or to be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." To that principle of our religion, then, we appeal ; and believing that thereby "the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works," we decline an appeal to any other authority.

What, then, saith the Scripture ? At the conclusion of the narrative concerning the first Christian sermon, the sacred historian says, "The Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved." Now, of what did this first Christian church consist ? Of course, of those who at least professed to seek to be "saved." And look at the context, and see who they actually were. They were such as gladly "received the word" of the apostles, as well as "were baptized," and who "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and in prayers." And, in the subsequent parts of the history, we find that they were denominated "believers," "disciples," "saints"—that they walked in "company," distinct from the world—and, at length, that these disciples were at Antioch called by a new name, even "Christians." Such were the people that obtained the denomination of "the Church." And, as the apostles and evangelists gathered such together, "in Judea, Galilee, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth,"

each congregation of them was called a "church." And hence we read of the church at Rome, the church of Corinth; so at Ephesus, at Colosse, at Thessalonica, &c., and also of the seven churches of Asia. We read also of churches in a province, as "the churches of Galatia," "the churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus." Nor let the latter expression, "in Christ Jesus," be overlooked, but let it be taken in connexion with the following: "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a *new creature*." To these churches, separately and collectively, the apostle directed epistles, and what designation does he give them? They are addressed as "the called," "saints," "beloved of God," "chosen to be holy," "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and predestinated to the adoption of children," having "redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of their sins, being delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son;" and, wicked as they were before, as now, "washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." This, without doubt, is the sort of people that the sacred Scriptures consider as "THE CHURCH." And, in no less than five places, such a number as might assemble in a private house, is called a "church." Now, after reading this, and searching the Scriptures, as did the noble Bereans, who can any longer confine their notion of a church to a church that happens to be established by human law? and so doing, consider all others, though agreeing in character with the apostolic churches above designated, as sectarians and aliens? Perhaps it has escaped their notice, that, upon the principle here mentioned, the same individual, who is a member of the church of England, if he reside in Scotland, where the presbyterian government is established by law, must, as an episcopalian, be a dissenter from the established church there, and if he go into Canada, where the Roman-catholic religion is established, that he

must be a Dissenter, and might be called a sectarian there too. Oh, let us return to the original—to the Scriptural meaning of “the church,” and not suffer our minds to be perverted by the changes that human laws have made, as dictated by human and worldly policy.

Now over this *Εκκλησια*,* this people, *called out of the world*, Christ reigns, and considered in the aggregate, they are formed into a “KINGDOM;” for, as noticed before, after having been “delivered from the power of darkness,” called elsewhere “the power of Satan,” they are translated into the “kingdom of God’s dear Son”—called also “the kingdom of Christ and of God”—a kingdom that is established *in the world as a kingdom within a kingdom*, and its rule as “in the midst of Christ’s enemies,” because the spirit, and wisdom, and taste, of the world are opposed to it, and the “world knoweth it not,” and, as Christ and the apostle John both testify, hate it.

SECTION II.

The Nature of the Kingdom of Christ, and as distinguished from the Kingdoms of this World.

No one acquainted with theology will call in question the reality of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ. Should any one dispute it, we need only refer him to the solemn confession which he himself made before Pontius Pilate, when, being interrogated by the latter, he answered, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” And when interrogated still more closely, Pilate saying unto him, “Art thou a king then?” he answered, “Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this

* From *εκ*, or *εξ*, and *εκκλητος*, or *καλεω*,—the former “out of;” and the latter, “called.”

cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

From this authoritative passage we learn, not only that Christ is a king, but that his kingdom is "*not of this world.*" No—it requires none of the insignia of worldly royalty—no wordly pomp or splendour—no worldly armies or navies—no worldly treasures. It is a kingdom that comes "without observation"—it is a kingdom that is "*within*" us—it is a kingdom of "righteousness, and peace, and joy," under a "king of righteousness," and a "king of peace." And it is erected and established in the soul "by (ev) the Holy Ghost," by his regeneration, and indwelling, and those thus regenerated, and thus having the spirit dwelling within them, are alone the subjects and servants of this kingdom, and indeed *fit* to be so. Hence, it is a SPIRITUAL kingdom. Nor is that all that is to be understood and believed concerning this kingdom. It is a kingdom that is opposed, in its principles, spirit, and taste, to the kingdoms of this world; for which reason it is, that both our Lord and his apostles put them in antagonism with each other. Witness the following expressions:—"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." Hence, as to taste, "Thou savourest the things that be of men, not the things that be of God." And when Paul is speaking of "the things of the spirit of God," he contrasts the "wisdom of this world" with the "wisdom of God," and the "spirit of the world" with the "spirit which is of God," observing, that so far from the things of the spirit of God being "received" by the "natural man" they are "*foolishness*" unto him. What other inference, then, can we draw from these passages,

but that a kingdom under the influence of the "wisdom," "spirit," and "savour" of this world, must be in antagonism with a kingdom under the influence of the "wisdom," "spirit," and "savour," which is of God?

The only thing that can be said to invalidate these remarks, as applied to the kingdom of which we are subjects, is, that as it respects our kingdom, it is considered as a *Christian* kingdom. True, the "*word* of the kingdom" is read and preached among us; but is the *spirit* of the kingdom operative in transforming us into its spirit; and is that spirit dwelling in us? If not, according to our Lord, we are not truly the subjects of the kingdom of Christ; for he says, that unless we are "born of the Spirit" we "cannot enter into" it; and his apostle Paul assures us, that if we have not this "spirit of Christ *in*" us, we are not even Christians. And, thus viewing the subject, the argument concerning the opposition subsisting between the kingdom of Christ and such a kingdom as is our's, or any other so-called Christian kingdom, must be valid, unless it can be proved that those from whom government proceeds are *spiritual* persons? And how far this is the case it is not for us to judge, only saying that so it might be, and that so it was, under the government of Charles II.

We advance a step further, and say, that not only are the kingdoms of this world, as far as they are under the influence of the "wisdom," and "spirit," and "savour" of the world, in *opposition* to the kingdom of Christ, but that the latter shall, as thus considered, "*break in pieces and consume*" all such kingdoms; for so we learn from Daniel, in the second chapter of his prophecies. Yes, and while such is their fate, Christ's kingdom, the "kingdom of righteousness, and peace, and joy, by the Holy Spirit," "shall stand for ever." And, as declared in another of Daniel's prophecies—"The kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Happy they

who now, as well as then, “receive this kingdom which cannot be moved into their heart,” and who “have grace to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear” in such kingdom!

SECTION III.

As Christ is “KING” in his kingdom, so is he “LAWGIVER and JUDGE” in his kingdom, and so ALONE.

That Christ, being King, should be Lawgiver and Judge in his kingdom, is so plain a proposition, that it need not be insisted on, for what is kingly authority without law and judgment? But the question which concerns us is—Is he so ALONE? That he is so, we argue thus:—1. From the common sense of mankind. What king would allow of another king or government to legislate or judge for him or it; especially if the government and nation should be diverse from the government interfered in? 2. From God’s repeated injunctions to Israel, not to add to or diminish from his laws. 3. The additions which David and Solomon, as kings of Israel, made, were under divine direction. 4. In the reformation by Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, kings of Judah, they made no new laws, but only commanded that the laws of God given by the hand of Moses, or David, or Solomon, should be observed. 5. Although the Jews were under the power of such absolute monarchs as Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, yet these kings did not impose new laws upon them, but only enjoined them to observe the laws of their God. 6. Christ, when upon earth, would not allow his disciples to “receive for doctrines the commandments of men.” Neither would his apostles; for they forbade the Christians to be “subject to ordinances—after the commandments and doctrines of men.” Nor can we wonder at it, if, 7thly, we consider, the *unfitness* of human government to legislate, or to give judgment concerning the things of the kingdom of God, as shown in the last section.

To all this, we add, that kings, and, of course, governments, so far from *ruling* over the kingdom or church of God, should, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "bow down to the church with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of her feet;" that is, should submit to her, and that most affectionately and humbly; not, indeed, to a church of *man's* forming or establishing, now papal, then protestant, then papal again, and protestant again, but to "THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD," modelled according to his laws, and after the will of her Lord, as declared in his word of unchanging order; not to any *man*, whether pope or king, but to *Christ* the King, who has established his church and his laws upon a rock, so that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against" them.

Thus, then, we see that the "princes of this world"—the governments of this world, are not to interfere with Christ and his kingdom as to law and judgment.

SECTION IV.

Worldly states and worldly men have no Scripture warrant for
 APPOINTING THE SERVANTS OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM, OR THE
 SERVICE.

Neither the "apostles," nor "evangelists," nor the "pastors and teachers," nor the "deacons," were appointed by worldly men at all, but by Christ, or as Christ directed, and all as in connexion with the spiritual church. Neither is there any intimation that, hereafter, when there should be an abundant accession to the church from the Gentiles, civil government, much less men of the world, should possess such authority, neither do the writers of the first ages teach any such thing. Moreover, if there be such a distinction and even contrariety between the church and the world as has been stated before, such a power must at once appear inconsistent; and Christ, the King and Lord of his church, would reject such an interference with abhorrence. But, alas! so

it is in this our land. The rulers of the church are, in fact, and virtually, appointed by the civil government; the place of their service, and the extent of their service, is by the appointment of government or worldly patrons; in some instances, they are determined by sale at auction, and the church, or the people of the church, have no choice in the affair! And what is the consequence? Both the bishops and the clergy who have been thus appointed must be more or less subservient to those who have appointed, and Christ's kingdom must "bow down" to the worldly kingdoms, instead of the latter bowing down to the former, as the prophets predict. Thus, also, the church becomes corrupted, imbibing a worldly spirit and taste, whence flows worldly and-unholy conduct.

SECTION V.

Far less are they to assume the power of modelling the POLITY of Christ's kingdom after the polity of their kingdoms.

But such was the case even in the early ages of the church. The Emperor Constantine, about three hundred years after Christ, addressing himself to the bishops, said — "Vos episcopi in ecclesia, ego EXTRA ecclesiam episcopus, constitutus sum;" that is, "Ye are bishops *in* the church, and I am appointed bishop *out* of the church." And afterwards, it appears, from Cave's "Ancient Church Government," and as we have shown in our work on "Dissent,"* that the external polity of the church or kingdom of Christ was modelled after the polity of the Roman civil government. At the Reformation, also, the king assumed the headship of this church; and our kings and queens ever since have been considered as "supreme governors of the Church of England," as well in matters ecclesiastical as in matters civil. It is true that they refer us to the interference of the kings of Israel and Judah in the Old Testament; but they overlook

* Page 13.

the idea, that their kingdom was "the kingdom of the Lord in their hands," and that, after all, what David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah did, was under divine direction, and by the commandment of the Lord, as stated in another part of this work, and as shown at large in answer to Burnet in our work on "Dissent."*

But such an assumption of power as this, such interference as this—is it in harmony with common sense? Is it not, though well-intentioned, an invasion of the divine prerogative? Is it agreeable to Scripture?

They refer us, also, to that passage in Isaiah where kings are mentioned as "nursing fathers" to the church: but look at the margin of the Bible, look at the Hebrew, and it will be seen that the word is simply "NOURISHERS;" and taken in connexion with the "bowing down" afterwards occurring, we may fairly infer that there is no such interference as that which we are opposing. But of this passage more hereafter.

If, then, we have with reason contended that the kingdoms of this world have no authority to interfere in matters of law and judgment with the spiritual kingdom of Christ, we have still greater reason for contending, that they have not authority to model the polity of Christ's kingdom after their polity.

SECTION VI.

Less still have civil governors authority to select articles of faith, a certain mode of worship, and certain forms of discipline, and establish them by law, to the exclusion of the rest of the subjects of Christ the King.

But this was attempted during several reigns, such as those of Elizabeth, James I., Charles I., James II., and particularly in the reign of Charles II., when, indeed, by the ACT OF UNIFORMITY, the present Church of England was established, to the exclusion of all such as could not declare

* Pages 72—75.

their "unfeigned assent and consent" to such articles of faith, modes of worship, or forms of discipline. And ever since that, the civil power has interfered so far with the government of Christ in his kingdom or church, as to make it a MONOPOLY of external privileges, and a WALL OF PARTITION between Christ's subjects! And is such interference as this to be justified? Where is the warrant for it in common sense? where in Scripture? And that this should be done when the nation was in such a state, when there was such a parliament, when there was such a court, when there were such clergy, and when there was such a king, makes it more unjustifiable! Assuredly, their "wisdom," their "spirit," their "savour," was not "of God;" assuredly, such should not exercise legislative or judicial authority over Christ's spiritual kingdom.

And so it remains. Submit we must to such usurpation; "assent and consent" we must, and that "unfeignedly," to all the "articles," to all the service, to all the discipline, to all the canons, of the Church of England, or we have no admission—we say not to their emoluments and preferments, for these we seek not, but to their pulpits, or to their peculiar privileges; but are, *in fact*,* excluded from the throne, from the councils of the sovereign, from the house of lords, from the house of commons, from the universities, from the seats of judgment, from the lieutenancies of counties, and, in a great measure, from the magistracy: for what administration selects Dissenters for offices of trust in the present day? Nay, many of the Church of England treat some of the most loyal, faithful, and zealous subjects of Christ's kingdom, as intruders and as aliens; and withal, avoid them as "causing divisions and offences," because, in fidelity to their Master and Lord, and in loyalty to their Great King, they dissent from such proceedings, and separate themselves from such corruptions and usurpations.

* We say *in fact*, "de facto," not from all "de jure."

We have thus far then, we think, proved that the civil power has no authority to *legislate* or to *judge* in Christ's kingdom, much less to *alter its polity*, and less still to *select* doctrines to be believed, modes of worship to be observed, methods of discipline to be used, and *establish them by law*, to the effect of the exclusion and crimination of those who cannot give their "unfeigned assent and consent" to the things thus selected or established, or to the assumption of such unlawful authority, so dishonourable to Christ their King, and so injurious to his subjects, as well as contrary to the doctrine that they have learned.

SECTION VII.

What the State MAY do.

In considering the subject of state power as to the church or kingdom of Christ, we have shown what the state may NOT do, we shall now inquire what it MAY do.

Although, in this discussion, our appeal is to the Scripture, yet we may inquire usefully, in the first place, what is the dictate of common sense in reference to the question. Now, a king, a government, as such, is the "minister of God for good;" anything, therefore, that tends to national good, must be an object of attention with such king or government. Now, who will deny the justice of the remark of Lord Bacon, which is this, "There never was found in any age of the world, either philosopher or sect, or law, or discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian faith." A nation is composed of individuals. Every one knows, that if a man once lives under the influence of the Christian religion, that he becomes sober, industrious, prudent, just, honest, and a blessing to society. This, then, is a good to any nation. The king or government, as the head of the NATION,—not as the head of the church, but as the head of the nation,—is bound to promote the Christian religion, a system that is so

indisputably productive of good, or to introduce Scripture as confirming this common-sense view of the subject : if "righteousness exalteth a nation," the king, as head of the nation, and as bound to exalt such nation, must encourage that "righteousness."

The argument, too, will bear the other way. Sin defiles a land, and causes the destruction of that land ; then, a king, as guardian of that land, must do all he can to prevent the defilement of such land, in order to prevent such destruction. Who can deny this, that reads and considers Lev. xviii. 24, 25, and 27, 28 ; also xix. 29, and xx. 22 ; and afterwards compares them with many other passages ? But, they are so much to the point that we will give them at full length :—"Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things : for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you : and the land is defiled : therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations ; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you ; (for all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled ;) that the land spue not you out also when ye defiled it, as it spued out the nations that were before you." Again : "Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my judgments, and do them ; that the land whither I bring you to dwell therein spue you not out." To the same purpose, "Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore ; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness." What language can show more strongly that sin *defiles* a land, that it makes it exceedingly *disgusting*, that it brings upon it *destruction* ? So it was with these heathen nations,—so it would be with the Israelitish nation however favoured ; and so, we may infer, it must be with all other nations ! Kings and governments, as the guardians of nations, and as ministers of God for good, must seek to prevent sin ; and as, on

the other hand, "righteousness exalteth a nation," they must seek to promote righteousness; not, as we said, as heads of the church, but as heads of the NATION.

Our way now seems open to show what kings and governments may do as to the church or kingdom of Christ. And since that is established in the world as the great antidote to the poison of sin, and the great promoter of righteousness, it seems a natural inference, that such kings and governments must have much to do with it, though not as before represented.

And now for our Scripture testimony, as bearing upon this subject. May we not learn from the conduct of the kings of Israel and Judah? Though they established no laws, altered no laws, presumed not to differ, either in law or judgment, from the laws and commandments given by Moses, or afterwards by David and Solomon, yet they took it upon them to charge and command the priests, and Levites, and people, as to the observance of the laws of their God,—they concerned themselves about the state of the temple and worship, and encouraged the people to hold fast to their religion and their God; they did not select any particular sect, to favour them, or any particular set of opinions or modes of worship, to establish them,—God had established them already; but they favoured such persons and such worship as *God* had established. Nor do we see any impropriety in a Christian king or government doing the same. Then look at the language of prophecy, concerning the Christian church or kingdom. What says David in the seventy-second psalm?—"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts." What says Isaiah?—"Kings shall be thy nourishers," (margin and Heb.) "And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee." And to the church it is said—"Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings." What mean these expressions, but that kings or governments should not only con-

cern themselves about religion, but should *help* it forward? In fact, so did heathenish kings help the Jewish church. When they were "wanderers among the nations" and captives in Babylon, Cyrus, King of Persia, made a proclamation of liberty to return to their own land, gave them wherewith to build an house in Jerusalem for worship, gave these expenses for the house of God out of the king's house, and ordered others to "help them with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts." Darius also allowed them, "both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, with their meat-offerings and drink-offerings for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven; also wheat, salt, wine, and oil," and anything that was needful to be had, "*out of the tribute due to the king.*" Artaxerxes and his counsellors also freely offered to the God of Israel, and provided for the Jews that returned with Ezra, bullocks, rams, lambs, &c., &c., to offer them in the house of God, which was in Jerusalem," as well as silver and gold, and anything that was needful to be had "*out of the king's treasure-house.*" He also gave them "unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil." And "toll, tribute, and custom, was remitted to the priests and Levites, &c. For all which the Jews blessed the Lord-God of Israel. To Nehemiah also, the King Artaxerxes gave timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and the house that he should enter into. The king and his counsellors freely offered; also his lords.

Thus the kings might be said to be "NOURISHERS"—thus the church might be said to "suck the breast of kings." But, observe, here was no return required—no condition imposed—nor even any inquisitorial power annexed to it. All that was expected was, that they should "pray for the life of the king and his sons." And so far from considering that these Jews were placed under obligation by the help thus afforded them, the king Artaxerxes expresses himself, as

though he thought he was doing his kingdom a benefit by it ; for " why," says he, " should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons ?" Moreover, here was no appearance of " bribe"—no interference with their religion—no control ; on the contrary, these kings leave them to their own laws, and their own interpretation of them. It is remarkably the case. For thus runs Artaxerxes' decree as to Ezra, " Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king and of his seven counsellors, to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand."—" And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that *do after the will of your God.*" Again : " And thou Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God : and teach ye them that know them not : and whosoever will not do the law of thy God, let him" so and so. Who would refuse "*gifts,*" who would refuse *help*, in such a way as this ? But this is not state pay requiring state control—this is leaving our laws and our interpretation of them to ourselves : rather it is an encouragement to keep to our own laws. Nor are these "*gifts*" as "*bribes*" or "*sups.*" Moreover, how great soever was the help afforded, it was not for the PERMANENT SUPPORT of the Jewish church—no, they had that from themselves. Add to all this—it was a *temporary* help. But yet it was a most beneficial help, and well might Ezra bless God that he had " put it into the heart of the king of Assyria," thus to help and thus to "*nourish*" them. And should we refuse help in like circumstances ? should we not bless our God for putting it into the heart of any king thus to help, if we needed it—such help, so unconditional, so unclogged, nay, so disinterested ?

Now really—1. Upon this ground, we do not see why so much should have been said against the " REGIUM DONUM." The house of Hanover, we believe, had a real regard for the

Protestant Dissenters ; and well they might, for the Protestant Dissenters had always been their staunch friends : and how natural to suppose that a king of that house should wish to give some token of it, and therefore might command that a certain sum should be given out of the civil list for the relief of poor ministers amongst them ! It is not necessary to suppose that it was designed as a “bribe,” nor that it was given as a “sop.” And what though, of late years, it has become a parliamentary grant, and, as such, is now considered as taken out of the pockets of the people, this is not the fault of the grantees, the Dissenters ; the parliament have made it so for their own convenience ; and hard it would be to deprive our needy brethren of such relief, and a relief, too, of so long a standing, since that, in a sense, may even be said to have given a *right of possession*, as in the case of long-possessed land without a previous legal title.

2. We do not see why, if the government would make a grant of a sum of money for EDUCATIONAL purposes, as the heathen kings above mentioned gave for the help of the Jews, *unconditionally, unfettered*, and evidently for the public good,—we say, we do not see why, *thus UNFETTERED*, we should not receive it gratefully. And the government, we conceive, might safely do so. Churchmen have declared themselves, of late, strongly for education ; there cannot be a doubt of the sincere desire of the Dissenters for it, as they have long urged it upon the attention of the public : and why not rely upon them, without inquisitorial inspection ?—without inspection of a party bias ? At least, government might give us a trial ; and the very rivalry would be a stimulus to the object. Far more equitable would this be, and far more likely to subdue that animosity which the late measure is likely to produce. But, alas ! there is an ANIMUS prevailing which shrinks at fair rivalry. The Dissenters would not shrink at a public discussion between churchism and dissent ; nor would they shrink at a fair trial as to their zeal for the education and intelligence of the people.

8. We do not see why the civil government, provided they adopt the *impartial* and *unfettered* plan above recommended, may not CONCERN THEMSELVES about the education, and religious education, of the people. Are they not "ministers of God for good?" Have we not proved that "righteousness exalteth a nation?" that sin is the defilement, and debasement, and destruction of the people of the land? and that there is nothing like the Christian faith to promote righteousness and counteract sin? If so, we may conclusively infer that an education which tends to instruct in such Christian faith, not only may, but ought to be a matter of concern with the civil government. But if liberty of thought, liberty of conscience, and liberty of the parent over its own child, be invaded, and a form of instruction obtruded upon the public mind, what shall we say to that? O, that government, with a noble spirit, unshackled by church influence, unprejudiced against Dissent, "letting," according to the apostolic injunction, "every one be fully persuaded in his own mind," would bring forward a plan in which the whole community might concur, and by which they might be stirred up to the discipline and information of the mind! This might be done—by grants of money for building schools, assisting or supporting them where necessary; requiring, that since the principle of religion is the Scripture, that that should be laid as a groundwork, and then leaving the management of them to masters and parents, under the direction of local committees chosen by the inhabitants of the village or town where existing, without *other* control, civil or ecclesiastical.

Are we not taught that the *magistrate*, as well as the minister, should concern himself about the instruction of the people, from the fact that "the law"—Israel's principle of religion—was "delivered," not only unto "the priests," but likewise unto "the *elders*" of Israel? And what friend of religion but must be impressed with the following injunction given to the latter as well as the former? "At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in

the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose; thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing; gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children which have not known anything may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." Weighty, gracious command! What minister or magistrate but must feel its importance in reference to the promulgation and reception of *our* law, our principle of religion—our principle of good order—that source of man's present and everlasting welfare, the Scripture?

Hence—4. We do not see why the civil government should not seek to promote the circulation of the SCRIPTURES—*nay*, why they should not *make grants* for the circulation of the Scriptures. This is very different from making grants for the promotion of certain systems of religion. The whole Christian community acknowledge the Bible to be the principle of religion, and therefore they could not consistently refuse to contribute to its diffusion. They all acknowledge that the civil magistrate is "the minister of God for good," and that the Bible is pre-eminently for the good of society; and therefore how could they demur to it? Would they not think it a grant well bestowed? Would not the member of the established church do so as well as the Dissenter? It may be said, indeed, that there are thousands who do not acknowledge the authority of the Bible; and must they pay for the circulation of that which they so much dislike? In answer to this, two things may be said—first, private interest must give way to public good; and secondly, that though they may not allow it, they *themselves* are benefited by the circulation, in the consequent good order and peace of society. Nevertheless, it may be better to leave it to a pub-

lie society, in which every one contributes as he pleases, as in the British and Foreign Bible Society. Should, however, the body politic become *diseased* by the failure of that society or other instrumental helps, reason would, that the *Head* of the body politic should step in and procure the healing medicine for its diseased body, however some portion of that body might dislike it, rather than that the body should perish.

5. We do not see why the civil government should not *found universities* as seminaries of learning and religion, provided they are formed upon *liberal* and *universal* principles. They should be so constituted as that no restraints should be put upon conscience—no bribes for the encouragement of particular systems—or sops to stop the mouth in the utterance of truth. Hence no body of theology or articles of faith should be enjoined: but the Scripture, as the principle of religion, be left to its own operation without *authorized* note or comment, or without note or comment, but as made by the respective teachers of it.

Such seminaries of learning and religion should also be *open to all*, without distinction, who possessed qualification for availing themselves of them: and no conditions of admission should be required, but such as are necessary to the good order and design of the establishment of such institutions. Seminaries like these, having a tendency to promote the national “good,” the rulers of a nation, as “ministers of God for good,” may consistently found them.

Nor—6. Do we see why the civil magistrate should not, when there is occasion for it, *proclaim a public fast*.

Not as head of the church, but as head of the nation, or body politic. That body we will suppose has become diseased by sin. It is like the nation of the Jews in the time of Isaiah. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.” And where are the heal-

ing medicines? They are in the Scriptures. Where are the physicians who shall apply them? They are to be found—if they themselves are not too much diseased—in the expounders of these Scriptures. Where are the surgeons that shall close, that shall bind these wounds, and mollify them with ointment? In the same. And may not the head of the nation—of the nation, we say, not of the church—call in the aid of these physicians and surgeons to seek to heal this political body? Assuredly it is proper, and far better than for want of such call, to suffer such body to perish! Is it not the head that takes care of the body?

But there is no occasion of wielding the spiritual sword when such a call, such a proclamation is made—let the service be a service of the mind, of the conscience, and of the will. It is God's to command, and the work of his ministers to enforce. Does not the conduct, not only of Jewish kings, such as Jehoshaphat, &c., but of a heathen king, such as the king of Nineveh, come in to our aid in this argument? He “proclaimed a fast”—“proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh,” exhorting his people to repent, and encouraged them to do so. But no threatening.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE AS TO STATE SUPPORT.

SECTION I.

The Church of God is not to look for SUPPORT to the civil government, but to itself, UNDER ITS great Head.

By “support” we mean permanent maintenance, and, by “the church,” such a church as we have represented before, not consisting of parishes, comprehending people of all sorts, and indeed including such as never attend the house of God,

and even infidels ; but flocks of professed Christians : and the ministers, not men admitted to the oversight without due order, but real shepherds, who are faithful men and able to feed the flock "over whom the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers." And, considering the Church as a kingdom, we mean such as profess to receive "the word of the kingdom," and to be the subjects of the kingdom, and the officers or servants of the kingdom to be such as are already *subjects* of it, professing to be born of the word and the Spirit of God. It is of great importance that this view of the subject be taken when we are considering whence should be derived the Churches' support. Let those who talk of the support of the civil government, and of the inefficacy of the voluntary principle, have in view a national church, divided into parishes, presided over by their respective clergy—we mean no such thing—we mean churches *called out of the world*, as the very word *εκκλησια* imports. We mean Christian flocks, actuated by Christian principles and a Christian spirit—and we mean too Christian shepherds, who love their "Great Shepherd," who sets them over them, and who love the flock, and lead them out.

The church—the kingdom, thus considered, must not look for its support or permanent maintenance to the world, to the state, or civil government ; but to itself, under the blessing of its great head. It must not look to the civil government ; for, 1. The Scriptures do not teach us so. Those passages in the Old Testament, which speak of the help which kings have afforded, such as Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, relate to temporary and *occasional* help which God put it into their heart to afford, for the occasion ; and that passage which has been so much insisted on, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers," &c., appears to have been mistaken. It is in the margin "*nourishers*," simply. Now a king may be a nourisher of the church when it needs nourishing, without the church being wholly dependent upon him for its support ; and he may be a nourisher in given circum-

stances, without being a "*father*," claiming it as his, constantly to maintain, and as his, to instruct and guide, and even rule, as some infer from the passage. Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, under the existing circumstances, nourished the church of Israel, but they had no idea of rendering it permanent support; they had no idea of instructing and guiding it, neither did they intend to rule over it, as a church. No, they left it to itself, to support itself; they left it to the instruction of its own law; they left it to the rule of its own High Priest. And, in the passage in question, we find that these very kings and queens, so far from assuming the rule over this church, are represented as "bowing down to it, and licking up the dust of its feet," as expressive of affectionate homage and submission. Unhappy mistake, then, of the word "*nursing father*," both by our Episcopalian and Presbyterian brethren!

2. If the church or kingdom of Christ were to be dependent on the kingdoms of this world, it must be in a *SERVILE* state, for state *pay* would be followed by state *control*. Who pays a servant permanent wages without exercising inspection, direction, and control? But what has been before said, sufficiently shows the incongruity of such power.

3. It may so happen that the civil government, for the time being, may be *hostile* to the spiritual interests of the spiritual church. Enough has been said before on this head too, to prove that this is a reasonable supposition. What spiritual Christian could wish to submit the inspection, direction, and control, of "the Church of the living God" to a King Charles the Second, his court and parliament, even by the consent and advice of the bishops which such a worldly confederacy would appoint? And, in general, are the courts and parliaments of the kingdoms of this world, such to whom the Church should be in a state of servility? Alas, never would she "stand upright," never would she "put on her strength," never would she "put on her beautiful garments," were that the case! On the contrary, the

spirit of the world and the wisdom of the world, being at variance with her spirit and her wisdom, would either *oppress* her, or, by her worldly emoluments and worldly preferments, given to assimilate her to itself, *CORRUPT* her and debase her.

4. It does not follow that because a *worldly* church—we mean a church looking for worldly emoluments and worldly glory—may not be supported by voluntary contribution, especially in such manner as such worldly church would expect—it does not follow, we say, that a *SPIRITUAL* church may not be so supported. Worldly people cannot be expected to have a sympathy with the “peculiar people” of God, a people who are *not* of this world; and therefore *they* may fail of affording to it an adequate support, such as worldly minds would deem adequate. And this leads us to remark, 5, and finally; That the spiritual church or kingdom of Christ, *may, and will, support itself*, without provision made for it, and established, and enforced, by human law.

The laws of the kingdom, even of Christ’s kingdom, have provided for such support, and what are they?—such as the following:—“They that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.” Those who “have sown” to a people “spiritual things, should reap of their carnal things.” “He that feedeth a flock, should eat of the milk of that flock.” “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.” Such is the law—and although the apostle Paul tells the Thessalonian church, that he and his fellow labourers had “wrought with labour and travail night and day, that *they* might not be chargeable to any of them”—circumstances so requiring it, yet, he intimates that they had “power” to claim a provision. And let it be considered, that such is the spirit of love in the true church, and such is the wisdom given to it, that, if it be a true church, and it has ability to do so, it will, of its own accord, support the cause of the gospel among them. If they happen to be so poor that they are unable, other churches should assist them. Nor is it contrary to the *spirit* of the laws of this kingdom,

that if, neither from themselves nor the other churches, they can derive support, the minister, the pastor, or elder, or bishop—for in the New Testament they are all one—should “work with his own hands,” as Paul did, to assist in getting himself a maintenance.

SECTION II.

*It is neither expedient nor lawful for the civil government to SELECT
A SECTION of the Christian church to give it support.*

Such is the case in England; and consequently, a considerable portion of the property of the nation is appropriated to the maintenance of that select section. But since the party *without*, contributes to such maintenance, they must contribute unwillingly, especially as they themselves have often to struggle with difficulties in the support of their own persuasion, and it must proportionally abridge their ability to do so. Nor is that all; the partiality shown, has a tendency to produce a bad feeling between the parties. From that most ancient and instructive history, the history of Joseph, all fathers, all governors, should learn the useful lesson of avoiding partiality towards those over whom they rule. As there, so in every case, such partiality tends to excite envious feelings; which, if indulged, at length may grow up into malice; and will, consequently, be productive of mischief. In what family would not such be the results? In what nation would it not be the obvious consequence? The party not favoured may be as good subjects as the party favoured; but lo, there is an observable distinction in the royal favour between them and the favoured party! Besides, the former seem to lose caste in society: they are looked upon as persons of inferior grade; and are often treated accordingly. But is this the will of Christ? Is it agreeable to the spirit of the gospel? Where is the warrant for such partiality in the New Testament? Kings and ministers of state

may, individually, favour any section of the Christian church they please, but not as the government. And when such a section becomes exclusively established by law, and endowed with millions, and with all worldly respectability, it becomes a *monopoly*, and a *wall of partition* between brethren, who ought to live together as "one in Christ Jesus." Moreover, such a state of things operates upon the human mind as a *temptation* to procure a place in the church, by those who are not of the church, and by consequence, corruption begins to eat out its vitals; nor ceases, things thus continuing, until it has done so.

SECTION III.

The church of Christ is not to receive gifts as BRIBES from the civil government; but to maintain its independence.

As a bribe given to a judge in earthly matters may pervert judgment, and as a sop given to the barking dog may stop his mouth, so may a gift from government blind the eyes and stop the mouths of the ministers of religion; and thus the church will be in danger of falling again under the accusation, "His watchmen are blind, they are dumb dogs, they cannot bark." And who would not deprecate such a state of things? Besides, is it not a reflection upon the King and Lord of the church, as though *he* were unable or unwilling to provide for its wants? The church of Israel—were they to look to Egypt or to Assyria for help? How did they provoke their God by doing so! "Wo to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that walk to go down to Egypt; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt."

As to gifts conferred upon the true church with Christian love unfettered by conditions, and leaving the church still to its own direction and control, that is considered in another place. Nor would we overlook the distinction between the *design* of the donor, and the practical tendency or

operation of the gift bestowed. The former may be pure; the latter may be otherwise. And in those public matters, as well as such as are private, a charitable construction should be put upon the design of the granter by the grantee, as far as it will admit. Yet have there not been in France and in England kings and ministers, who were more political than benevolent, and who, if they could not stop the streams, would pollute them?

The kingdom and church of Christ must not then be under the influence of the kingdoms of this world: it must be under the influence of its own head and king; and must therefore maintain its independence.

SECTION IV.

The Church of Christ is not to receive HELP from the state, if, in return, it requires an inquisitorial, controlling, and directing power over its affairs.

A kingdom belonging to one who is "prince of the kings of the earth," who has "all authority in heaven and upon earth," and who is "head over all things to his church" as well as "head of his body, the church" assuredly cannot be under the direction, control, or even inquisitorial power, of kings of the earth, and civil governments; if, therefore, help be offered upon such conditions, the friends of Zion's king must, of course, reject it. This, they might consistently do, even upon such requisitions, on the ground of jealousy, for the honour of their sovereign's independence; but if the help afforded be clogged with conditions, which may prove detrimental to the interests of Christ's kingdom, and to its nature, and constitution, of course, their fidelity to their king would, on a second ground, require them to decline it. Indeed, it does not look like "bowing down to the church, and licking the dust off her feet," to be requiring any such condition; far

from it: nor is there any need; for the true church—the church which we have represented, will know from the instructions and laws of her Lord what to do with such help; nor would she abuse it any more than did the Jewish church the help of Cyrus, of Darius, and of Artaxerxes.

And, before we close, let us remark, that in pleading for the subjection of kings or governments to the church, according to the passage above alluded to, we are not pleading for kings submitting to the church, as represented in the person of the pope; for we know of no such representative—nor do we plead for any external homage or subjection whatever—all that we mean is, that all the kings and governments of the earth should own Christ the Head of the church as their Head, and cordially and affectionately receive those doctrines and obey those laws which are contained in the “word of the kingdom,” as the rule of his church and kingdom.

